BRITAIN'S LONGEST RUNNING COMMODORE 64 MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 1990

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YC

C64 C128



STRIDER 2

REVIEWED

ANOTHER QUICK SLASH

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ALSO REVIEWED:

- THE SPY WHO LOVED ME ✩
- NINJA REMIX ✩
- CREATURES ✩
- CURSE OF RA ✩
- WHEELS OF FIRE ✩
- BADLANDS ✩

AND LOADS MORE!

If there's no tape on this cover, ask the Newsagent where the blinking flip it's got to!

12

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YOINKS COMIC FEATURING YOUR FAVE CHARACTERS INSIDE



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An evil force of monster machines has risen to conquer the Galaxy. One by one the peaceful races of the Galaxy have been attacked and enslaved by the Cyborg Monsters. No race has the strength to stand against the power of the Cyborgs. One lone rebel rises from within the ranks of the mechanised monsters. Part dragon, part machine, the Cyborg Warrior fights back against the tyrant masters. The Galaxy has a Hero. Hope returns to the hearts of the people at the rise of the armoured champion they call "ST DRAGON".
" I haven't seen a decent shoot-em-up for ages (in fact Silkworm was probably the last). Now this looks set to end with a product from the very same Silkworm programmers that could challenge the mighty R-Type itself!"
(Zero Sep. 1990)
THE SALES CURVE
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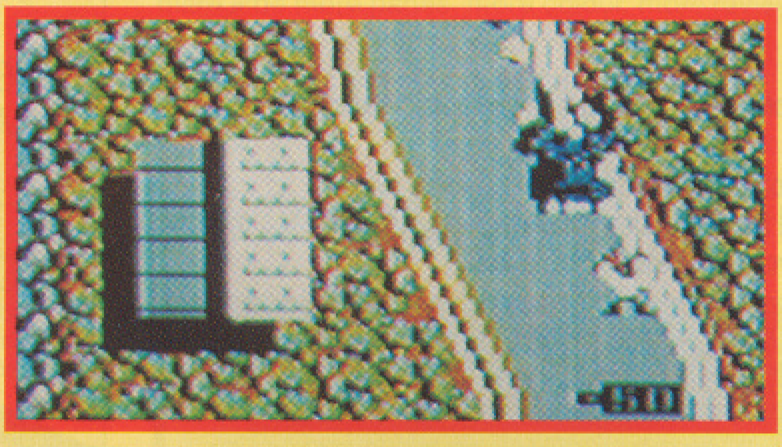
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REVIEWS

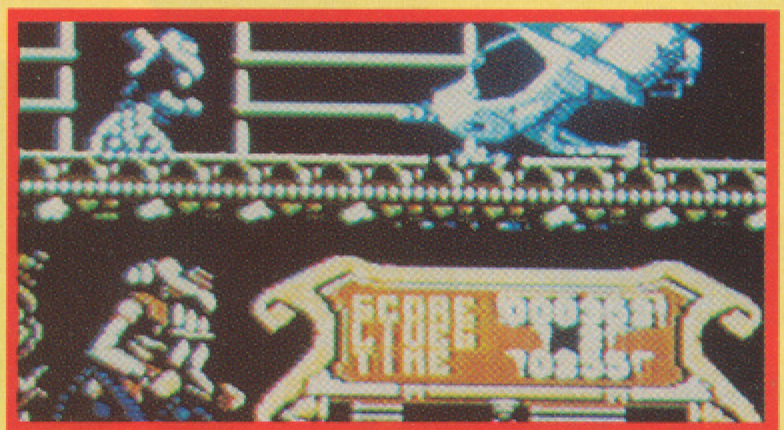
ON THE TAPE

You can wander around a rather dank castle, smeg the frag out of rival gangs, run a successful games company, and sort of gobble up loads of dotty things, with this month's completely FREE plastic cassette thingmy! Knightmare is based on the ever so popular TeeVee show where contestants flap around with a bucket on their head, and is supplied by Activision. Software House is supplied by Cult, a subsidiary of D&H Games, and the other two are completely original!!!

FEATUROONIES



STRIDER 2 - There's this geezer who mashes all kinds of meanies, and do you know how he does it? By slashing all over them! Yep, he get's out his chopper and uses it - isn't it disgusting???



THE SPY WHO LOVED ME - Another serious case of Bondage here with a Spyhunter clone disguised in a tenous plot link with the early Roger Moore movie. He was crap anyway, Sean Connery was much better, and me mam thinks so too!

REGULARS

POSTER

YC - PROBABLY THE BEST COMMIE MAG EVER!

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Commodore

December 1990
(On sale November 23)

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But First This..

What's mundo, bodacious, wicked, rad, green and slimey? A copy of YC covered in snot! Well, how else was I to open this very last But First This except with a truly tacky and tasteless joke? Yep, it's time to confess that YC, after one year, will be changing to suit 1991. But more of that later, you want to know what's happening now!!!

If you flap your mag around a bit you'll find a big crunchy thing in the middle, have a flick through it 'cause this is your absolutely, splendidly free comic featuring Post Apocalypse, Flame Head, and Oozin' Eugene in a look at each of their lives in a way never seen before. And not only that but there's a 'cut-out-and-clothe' Posty with extra munchy add-ons to make him look even more weird than ever before.

To compliment this though, next issue has another wicked free gift with the inclusion of the Post Apocalypse board game (are we mega-generous or what?), with tonnes of cards, counters, board and a game to coincide with it on the tape. And for a few issues after that, there'll be more data on cassette, more cards and more characters to collect in order to expand upon the basic set (although everything you need to play for four players is included next ish).

Also it's our birthday issue (why not send us a card, the best ones WILL be rewarded) next month and we will be one year old (as YC). And to top it all, there'll be more pages, more colour, more reviews, and a brand spanking new look (Mark's got his thinking cap on)...

See ya around sometime (probably)!

Rik Henderson



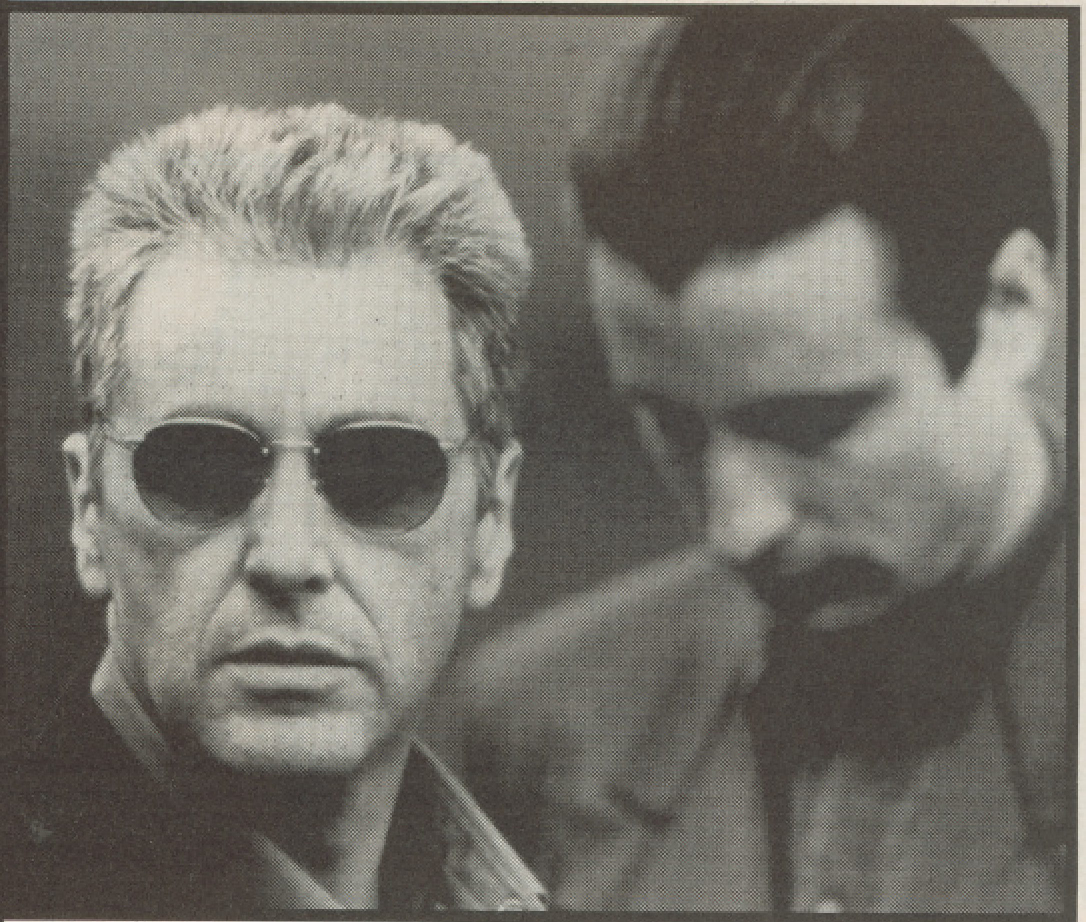
NEWS

DATA ....WITH BE



OH MY GOD!

The New York Mafia have landed in Brummyland! Those Masters of

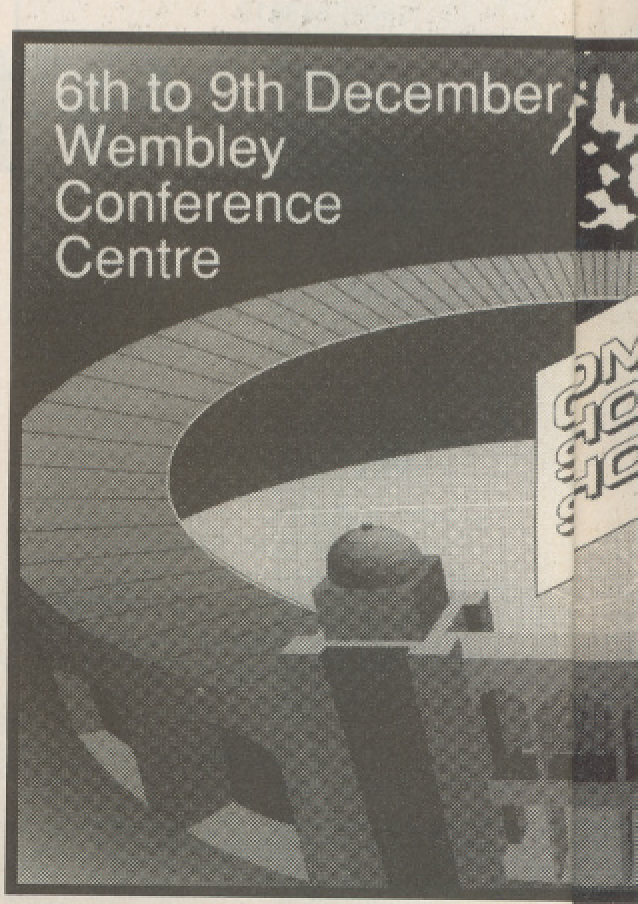


Licensed product are hoping to get "a head" of the competition with their latest coo "The Godfather" - and I wouldn't try and get in their way!
This powerful license includes the rights to both "The Godfather" and "The Godfather II", both of which were awarded Oscars for 'Best Picture' and the forthcoming film "Godfather III", which is to be premiered in the UK in March 1991. The third of this highly acclaimed series stars Al Pacino as Michael Corleone and Andy Garcia as Vincent Mancini and continues the legendary saga of the Corleone family and there is sure to be more than one blood bath! The new chapter also stars Diane Keaton, Talia Shire, Eli Wallach, Joe Mantegna, Bridget Fonda, George Hamilton and Sofia Coppola (more than a mere Home and Away cast)!.

There will be a double helping of Godfather - The Computer game as US Gold will be releasing a high level interactive-adventure game for grown-ups and boffins and an action game for kiddies and grown-ups wanting to be kiddies.Godfather III the film and Godfather the games will be emerging on a screen near you in March 1991.

SHOPS AWAY!

Forget Oxford street and the pretty



lights - for your true Chrimbo Shopping put on your battle gear and get on down to the Computer Shopper Show 1990 at Wembley Exhibition Complex on 6,7,8, and 9 December, where there promises to be bargains galore!

Not only will you find an Aladdin's Cave of computer presents but loadsa side attractions to keep you entertained and well advised. There will be a major Advice Centre and in keeping with the Wembley venue a Computer Football Association Challenge Cup Final and the first European Cup of the computer world.You're bound to see Santa doing his rounds there as the Show is trying to get into the Guiness Book of Records with the largest number of Santas ever seen under one roof - and I thought there was only one!

TIE A RE-INKED RIBBON

Is the computer industry about to

EVY BABES!

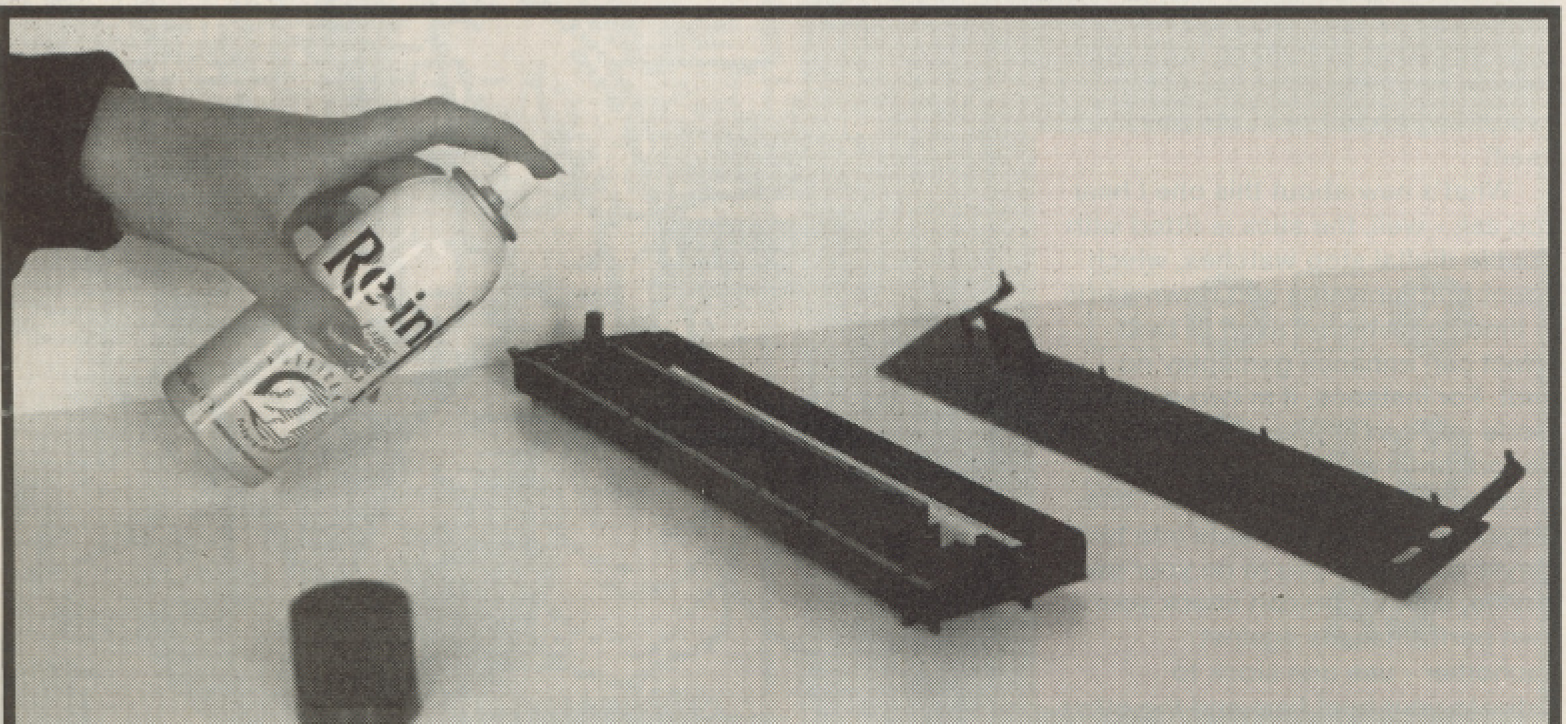


become a green issue along with ozone friendly hairspray and disposable nappies? Office 21 have come up with their own answer to the 26 million computer ribbons thrown away last year called "Re-Ink" which not only helps save the environment but the computer users pocket!

The ink formula, which started off life in a bucket in the MD Simon Caspell's kitchen is sprayed onto the top of the fading ribbon. It then spreads evenly as it dries giving a better than new quality black print. A tin of this wonder stuff costs £12.95 and can replenish ribbons over 30 times.

Think of all the savings! The only problem is - what do you do with the empty tin!







PLAYING AGAINST TIME

Joystick Kings, Spectravideo have launched a new innovative stick called the Mega Board to their impressive range, complete with well um nearly everything but the kitchen sink, this stick does everything apart from time travel itself!

What's new about this one I hear you ask - well, the stick is fitted with double digital stop watches, which count both upwards and downwards in time and which if used to best effect can enhance gameplay no end! For instance, if in two-player mode you can time eachother's performance and compare results. Think about it logically dudes - one-player games can be made into two player games! If you're on your own (sniffle, sniffle) you can check your own performances against eachother - use one clock to indicate your best time and the other to measure current time. The clocks, apart from just telling the time can also vary the speed of the player and the speed of the auto-fire.

This Board-acious product is in the shops now priced at £24.95 and for the games player who thinks he has everything would make a super Chrimbo stocking filler!

STARS IN THEIR EYES

"Star Performers" is the name of a new budget range from Electronic Arts. And why not - cos they're all re-releases of games which at full price took the stage by storm. The games costing £2.99 on cassette and £6.99 on disk cover a range of categories including simulations, adventures, arcade and Fantasy



Role Playing.

The first titles available for your Commie 64 will be Bard's Tale II (disk only), Caveman Ugh'lympics (disk only), Chuck Yeager's AFT, Ferrari Formula One, Skate or Die, and Strikefleet (disk only). For more news and reviews, forget the Sky at Night, read YC instead!

WARGAMING FIASCO

The Leeds Wargames Club will again run its games convention FIASCO on Saturday the 29th June 1991 at Armley Sports Centre and it promises to contain a bigger and better PBM content that before. FIASCO hopes to have over 30 PBM traders with some running demo games. There will also be PBM talks and the FIASCO PBM games awards. If you wish to take part in the voting or just want more information drop John Smith a line at 27 Armley Grange Mt, Leeds, W Yorks, LS12 3QB.



THE DREAM TEAM

The YC Review Team Detail what they did on a cold Fireworks night...



Rik "Banger" Henderson
With all that fizzing and whooping Rik got a bit scared and hid under the sheets of his bed, "At first I thought old Saddam was on the attack until I heard a lone voice crying 'penny for the guy', and I realised it was November 5th!" what a card , eh?



Ashley "ROCKET" Cotter-Cairns
Ash donned a black cloak and a funny pointy hat and when it was pointed out it was Halloween was a few nights earlier he said, "No, i'm off to blow up the Houses of Parliament!" Unfortunately it was closed so he went down to Mac Donalds instead.

THE SKOREBOX

Each game is given different ratings in the form of a wonderful froody skorebox (notice the change of letter from 'c' to 'k' in order to make it even more fashionable).

Graphics (out of 10) - This is what we think the games appeal is presentation wise and graphically.

Sonics (out of 10) - Does the music grate? Do the sound FX come across as realistic?

Fix Factor (out of 10) - This is what we think the instant appeal of a game is like. Does it grab your attention straight away? Or is it too hard to get into?

Half-Life (out of 10) - How long will the game retain your interest? Minutes? Hours? Days?

Overall (out of 100) - This is the personal rating given by the reviewer of how good they think the game is.

00-25 This game is so abysmal that the only reason anybody would ever want to see it is for novelty value.

26-50 Incredibly dull, and not interesting in the slightest. Watch 'Hitman and Her' and you'll get the general idea of what I'm talking about.

51-75 Not too awful, and probably somebody's cup of tea, although we'd rather stick to ginger beer.

76-84 A good game with more going for it than most. It'd be best to check these ones out in the shop before you buy them.

85-99 Go out and buy immediately, these games are hot. So hot in fact that you'd be done for taking them into a no-smoking area. Any game getting this score are announced as YC Fun Ones (the YC seal of recommendation).

100
No game has ever got this rating, and any game to ever get this would be the best that anybody could ever do on the commy 64. You'll know when a game this good comes around because all the games players in the world would wander around and bump into lamposts and things.

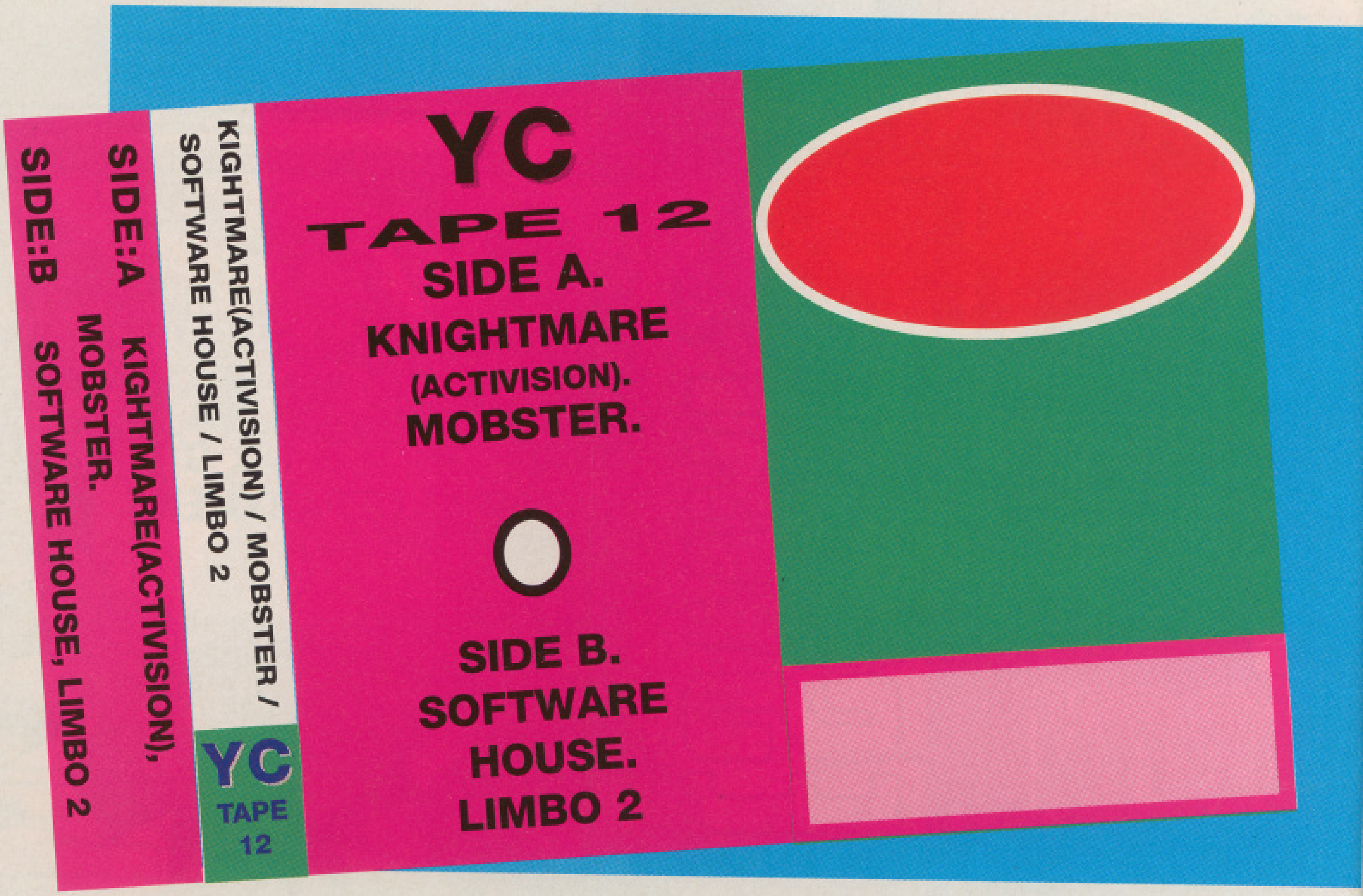



U.S.G
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fist this Christmas!

ON THE TAPE

4 FREE GAMES, ALL AS STIFFY AS A DEAD RABBIT'S EARS! YOU FIND A FREE TAPE AS GOOD AS THIS ONE AND WE'LL EAT RIK'S SOCKS (A PRETTY SAFE BET, WE HOPE).



RUNNING ORDER

Side A: Knightmare, Mobster
Side B: Software House, Limbo II

KNIGHT MARE

(Activision)

Welcome to the game...

This is the Time to end all Time;
This is the Time out of Mind;
This is the Game out of Time
And the game to blow your Mind
"Welcome Watchers of Illusion
To the Castle of Confusion.
I am known as Treguard, Master of the Dungeons.

Now is the time that your first quest calls
From Damonia Castle's dark halls.

Fighting the evils that creep here
From depths, things that feed on fear.

Spell casting use in times of need,
If ever you are to be freed.

Warning! Warning! I will watch you
And give an occasional clue.
Here be Oracles of good and bad fame:
One named Runius, one Buggane.

Quiz them when you need advising

On all sorts of things surprising.
But the first Knightmare quest is yours
To win or lose (or die, of course).

For here nothing is real
And all must surely be an illusion.
So just keep telling yourself:
'It's only a game...'
Isn't it?"

Let us enter now the book of legend...

I place you somewhere in time, in a land where strangers are not welcome. Survival is your aim, knowledge is your target. Search the dungeons and rooms of Damonia Castle for the objects which may help free you from the clutches of the dark castle and it's fantastical inhabitants.

Your advisors are two oracles, who act as clue givers. One oracle is good, and often gives correct clues in the form of riddles etc. The bad oracle will do everything it can to throw the knight into certain danger and death. The knight may consult the oracles, but only one will answer, and may not be cross-examined by the knight. By carefully studying the contents of both oracles' statements, valuable clues may be learned.

Your life force is represented by a candle at the edge of the page. It will decrease throughout the game. Life force is further decreased each time the player is hit by a guard, for example, and life force never increases.

Each page of the book details some place within the castle, into which life is breathed when you direct the knight into it. The dungeon master and oracles watch over all of the knight's actions and each may appear from time to time to offer comment.

Controlling your knight

The knight cannot see due to the necessary full-facial helmet. And so you must use a joystick and keyboard keys to control the movement of your knight.

The keys are:

Fire - '='
Move Left - '<'
Move Right - '>'
Move Down - '?'
Move Up - ';'
Pause Game - 'F1'
Resume Game - Use Fire
Quit Game - 'Q' Then 'Y'
Start Game - Use Fire
View Words - 'SHIFT'
Enter Words - 'RETURN'

Certain inhabitants of the castle will ask you questions and give you problems to solve. Warning! Read the questions very carefully before you select an answer or solution. Confirm your selection by pressing the fire function.

To perform specific functions within the castle. You may use one or two word commands.

Select the first word of your required command by pressing the first letter of that word. If the speech bubble at the top of the screen does not display the word you require, press the shift key. This will show you the next available word.

When the speech bubble displays your required first word, press the Enter Word function. A second word will now appear - again, you may alter this word by pressing the first letter of the required second word or the Shift key to cycle through the available words.

When both words together make the command you wish to use - ie, open door - press the Enter Word function key. This command will now be issued. Be very choosy!

If you press 'D' and the word 'Drink' is displayed when you wish to drop something, press the Shift key until the word 'Drop' appears. Press Enter Word function and select the second word in similar fashion.

You may repeat your last command by pressing Enter twice. You may change the second word of your instruction before pressing the enter key a second time if you wish. To view the available command words press the Shift key.

Certain commands, such as Load, Save or Quit are one word commands.

To see your inventory (the things you are carrying) press the 'I' key.

Spellcasting

Merlin's Magic. You'll have to work out how to gain these magical powers, but beware! These powers require experimentation - some of them are good, some of them are bad, you must establish for yourself which is which.

We know very little about the spells available but old spell books tell us the following:

To use a spell, you must select the word SPELL as the first word, then the name of the spell as the second word, then press Enter or the Life button to execute that spell. Note! You first have to find the spells.

ANVIL: This is a large, cast-iron anvil, which hovers at the top of the screen, causing evils to be squashed into the ground.

CASPAR: Caspar the key. May be used on certain doors within the castle.

ALCHEMY: Turns characters to a solid gold sphere. Most objects turned to gold may then be collected by the knight as treasure.

ICE: A rain cloud will form and freeze everything. As soon as the cloud vapourises the characters will come back to life.

TOAD: Turns characters into 'warty' toads.

METAMORPH: Turns characters into different characters.

Fighting

In order to fight you will need to find a weapon, such as a sword, then by moving next to the character you wish to fight and pressing the fire function repeatedly you will be able to engage in combat.

You may also pick up bricks to throw at other characters. To do this you may either use the instructions to tell your knight to 'Throw Bricks' or you may set the first command word to 'Throw' and then use the fire function to trigger the throwing.

Saving and loading

If you choose the command 'Save' this will save your current position for future usage. You may return to this position by selecting 'Load'. Please note, this is a RAMSAVE, and is not saved to cassette or diskette, and so if you switch off your computer you lose your original position.

They say that life is but a game
So welcome to the game...
Where you can lose it;
Your life, that is.

MOBSTER

Mobster is fast, furious arcade strategy game set in the dog-eat-dog world of 1920s Chicago. As the boss of a small gang of disgruntled thugs, your ambition is to claw your way up the slippery latter of organised crime by taking on business opportunities, or should one say organised massacres that come on offer from day to day.

The strategy-decision screens in Mobster are very user-friendly. They use a joystick-pointer system, so you just point and press to select an option.

CASSETTE

Getting the scam

The game opens on the information screen. This does not allow you to input any commands, but just displays basic information about the gang. Your gang starts with:

3 members
2 shotguns
15 crates of booze
1 limousine

The gang's overall morale is 5, and each member is being paid $15 per day. Your total starting capital is $500.

Money makes the underworld go round. This is what you're trying to gain, and once you've got it you can spend it on weapons, paying off gang members, new limousines to carry them, and booze which can be pushed at a profit or used.

To get money, you must take on one of the 'jobs' on offer, or sell some of your stock of booze. Every day, four different jobs are on offer. To view these, select the VIEW JOBS option using the pointer. A specimen job might read:

JOB #1 TAKE OUT A MINOR MAFIA DRUGS RING ON 44TH STREET FOR $2407.

Mafia hoods are moderately skilled and therefore hard to go up against. The other options are police, the most difficult, and civilian, the least. The size of the operation; small; large; or major determines the number of snipers you must shoot to gain control and complete the job. The fee, of course varies with the difficulty of job.

BONUSES

If you complete a job, various bonuses may be awarded. Knocking over the booze ring, above, would award you extra booze. A protection racket will get you extra money, a headquarters; extra gang members and an operation; extra weapons. You don't always get the bonus.

To accept a job, you select one from t he View Orders menu. Just point to the job you want and press fire. This menu also allows you to buy and sell booze and issue them to the gang, and purchase other things such as weapons and cars, providing you have the money. You can also increase the gang members' wages, if they are getting restless.

When you have selected a job, you can choose the resources you wish to devote to it, including gang members and limos. Remember you can only get six gang members in one limo. You can also select how many weapons to use. These can be shotguns or submachine guns. Submachine guns can fire faster, but are more expensive and use up more ammo.

Into Combat

After selecting and equipping your force, you proceed to the combat choice screen. This allows you to Attack or Retreat. After every attack you return to thus choice, but to attack you must have hoods and weapons left. Retreating without completing the job may badly affect morale.

Selecting Attack will get you into an arcade shoot-out. You will be faced with a view of the buildings holding the operation you are trying to take out. The enemy snipers will pop up in windows and on roofs, and you must shoot as many of them as you can as fast as possible.

The targetting cursor is a circle controlled by the cursor. This is not the gunsight, however. The sight is a set of cross-hairs which has a certain inertia - it may take some time for it to home in on the target, making life much harder.

Be careful not to waste ammo, as running out may lead to the loss of men and weapons. If the snipers are left standing for too long you may also take losses.

If you shoot enough snipes, you get paid, gang morale rises and you stand a 60 per cent chance of getting a bonus.

Keep the boys happy

Bear in mind that morale is crucial. If the gang's morale drops too low, the treacherous bunch may well shoot you in the back. At the very least, their performance drops. Morale may be preserved by paying higher wages, or issuing some of your stash of booze to the gang members.

Got the picture? OK, now off you go. Oh and remember - let's be careful out there!

SOFTWARE HOUSE

All the trials and tribulations of running your own software company. Can you be a successful director of an up and coming software house? You have the program - now it's up to you. Is this all we can give in the way of instructions? Yep, sure is!

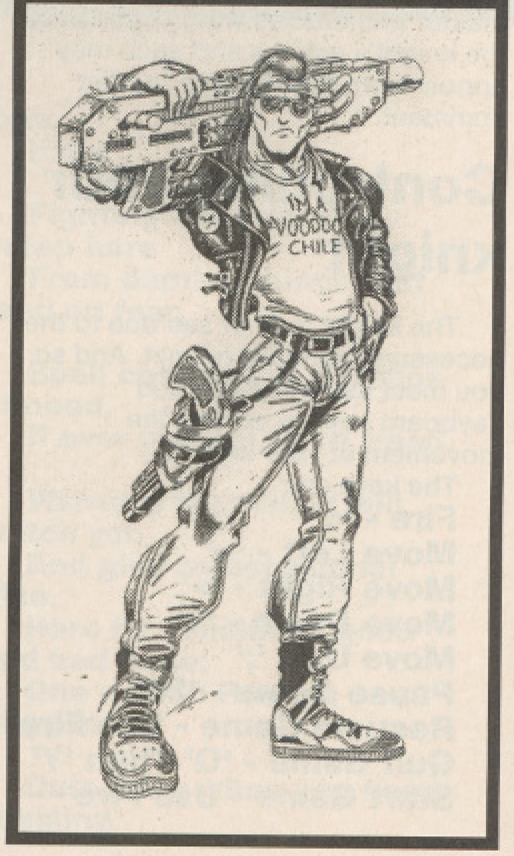
LIMBO II

We now present for your entertainment and amusement the updated version of Limbo (previously published on the YC tape), aptly titled Limbo II - Planet Dillon. As before, plug your joystick into port 2 to move Wolthamstow around each zone. The idea of the game is to clear all of the blobs off the squares whilst avoiding the Dillonite guards. Contact with these or the scrolling background results in energy loss. Flashing squares will electrocute you. Blocks with moving squares on them are random squares, If you move onto one of these and press the fire button, something at random will happen. (It could be good, bad or extremely bad). Squares with moving arrows on them hurl you off in that direction. That's all there is to it!!!

POPPED YOUR CASSTTE IN AND FOUND THAT IT DOSENT WORK? THE CATS PEED ON THE COMPUTER? OR THE TAPE IS FAULTY! IF IT'S THE LATTER, POP THE CULPRIT IN TO A JIFFY BAG AND SEND IT TO:

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YC, 20 Potters Lane, Kiln Farm, Milton Keynes, MK11 3HF.

Remember, don't fold your artwork and make sure it's on plain paper!!!

All the normal compo rules apply! The closing date is 15th January 1991.

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STRIDE



US GOLD
£9.99 Tape
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Strider is back with a capital Stride. Rik somersaults his way through the sequel to US Gee's latest, and possibly greatest, coin-op conversion.

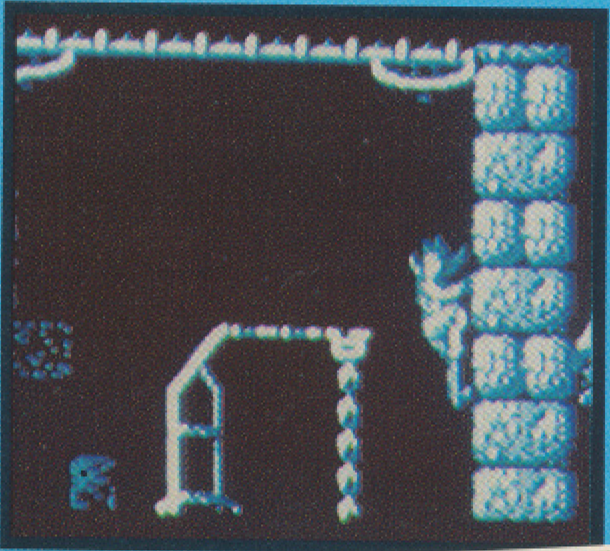
There's this guy see, and he's well known for getting out his chopper in sticky situations, waving it in front of himself and watching other people die in awe. This sort of behaviour would have been liable to get this fellow locked away for the rest of his life if he wasn't Strider, the righter of wrongs and habitual slasher. And even then he'd have to perform a few 'favours' for the local constabulary.

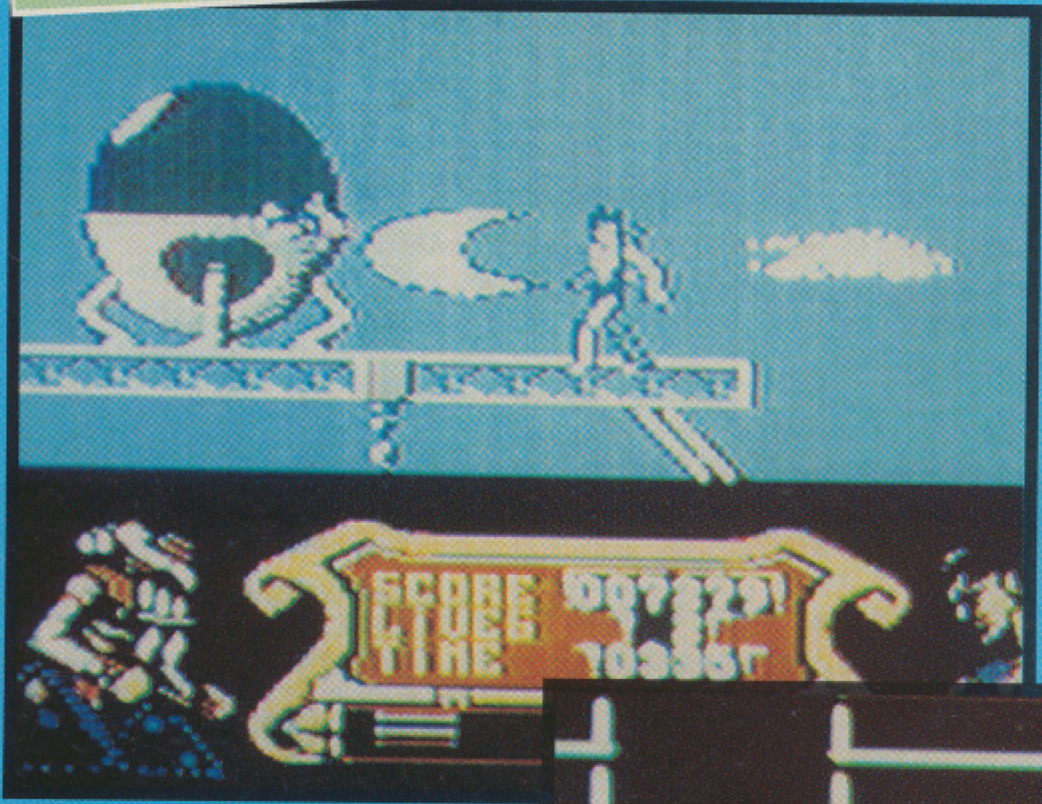
One of the favours that he has been roped in to perform in order for certain people to ignore his antisocial habits comes straight from the top, from the leaders of the world themselves. They seem to have gotten themselves into a bit of bovver, 'cause whilst they were arguing about a new world wide currency, and who could have the last jam scone, some big bug eyed loonies from outer space zipped down, frolicked around a bit, and made off with some bint who just happens to look like Maria Whittiker. Now if this was THE Maria Whittiker we'd not even bat an eyelid, we might even have a street party, but this gorgeous being in the female mould just so happens to be one of the most influential world leaders on this planet.

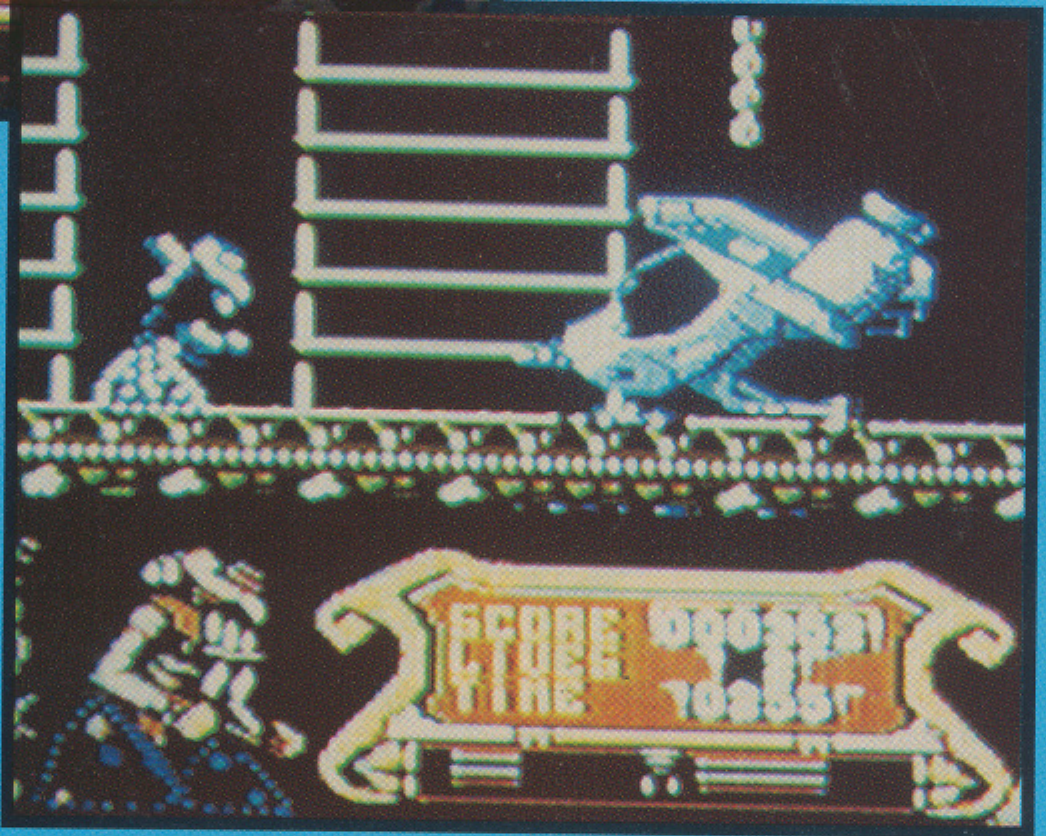
Now you must put on your lycra strides (is that why they call him Strider?) and rescue the fair maiden, otherwise the knitting club may get to hear of your urinal activities and ban you from the crochet circle. All you know though, is that she's being held on the planet Magenta, and she's at the end of five levels of gruelling gameplay.

The first level finds you in a forest where you have landed your transport and you must make your way to the two towers (the outer defence of the planet), which is the second, and you must progress through five areas of the planet in order to finally rescue the pretty politician.

Each level is HUGE and consists of an immense amount of mapping, 'else the only way you'll complete it is by an utter fluke. There are tonnes of Magentans (?) to stop you from getting even to the local chip shop let alone all the way to the final







ER 2

spacecraft, and even if you manage to swathe your way through those you have to face big munchy end-of-level guardians before you can progress. But Strider has a new power in the sequel, you see, if you collect the icons that are scattered around and you manage to collect enough of them, you'll transform into a big and mean, I'll eat your spleen, robot with extra firepower. If you don't then you'll probably fit into another can afterwards, a can of dog food.

Another difference between this and the former is that Strider now possesses a gun as well as his wobbly sword, which he can use when he is stationary, and sometimes it will be essential to use it. And as well as the little chap's amazing acrobatic powers, he's able to scale walls and climb up ropes and chains too (amazing this fellow isn't he?) and you'll need to do tons of that believe me!

The major thing that Strider II retains from its original is the great, and smooth, gameplay. There's nothing more satisfying than a quick slash to surprise the opposition, and the sweep of hot laser fire belching from your sword spanks any unwanted company. The graphics though seem to have changed quite dramatically and the colours aren't as pretty as Strider, although when you consider the fact that the levels are much larger than they were in the original you probably have your answer.

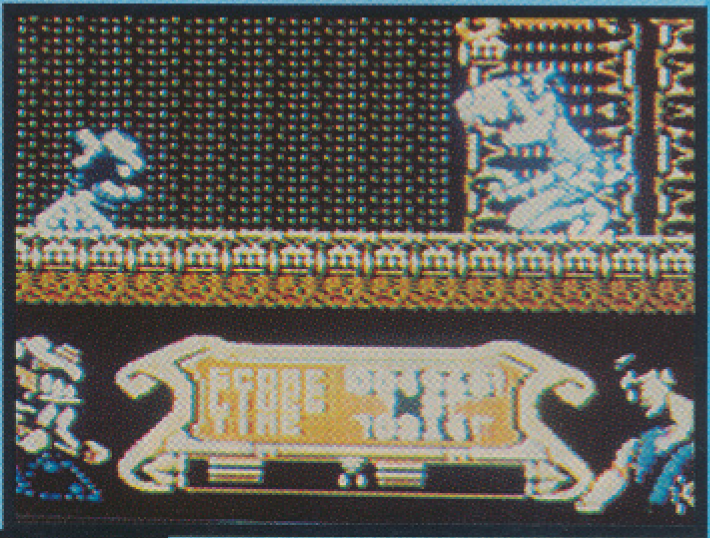
The first game was a Capcom coin-op conversion and the news is that this is going the other way round, it has been designed and programmed by Tiertex (responsible for LOADS of games) and Capcom will be converting it ONTO an arcade machine.

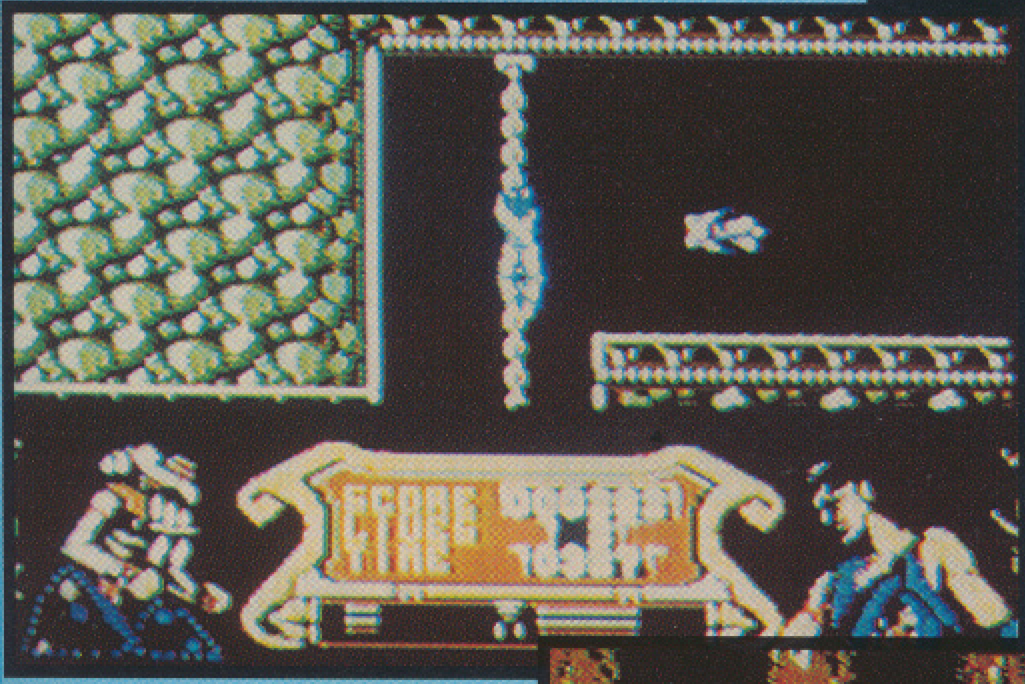
Although Strider II reminds me a lot of Turrican (and Turrican 2) it has suitable differences that just beg fans of the original and arcade adventurers to buy it. It's a rootin', tootin', slashin', smashin', bashin'em-up and it's darn well proud to be that way.

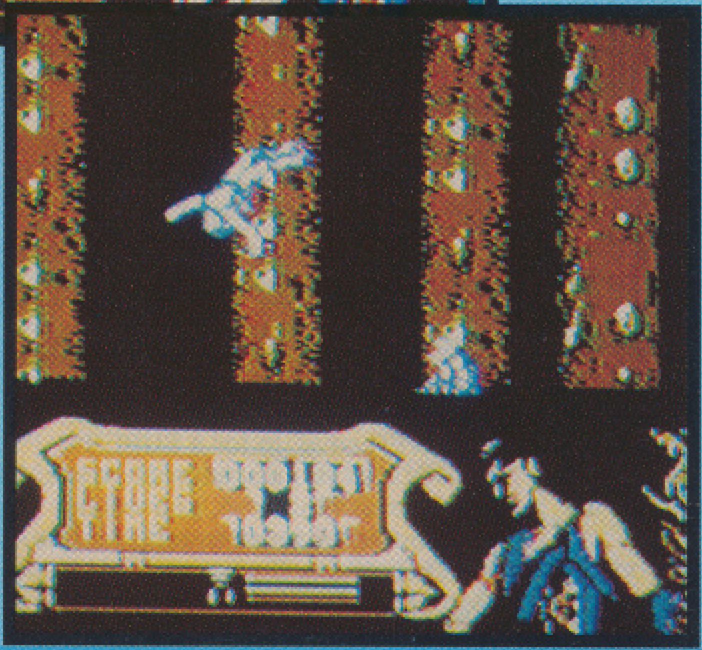
skorebox

	8		8
	9		9

overall 89







Fax

Stride A Black Horse

Strides is another name for a pair of trousers, so is chaps and pants.

Andy Stewart had a big hit with the song 'Donald Where's Your Troosers' which was quite surprising because he'd spelt trousers wrongly, and people usually like their record sleeves grammatically correct.

YC FUN ONE

STUCK EH? **GOT A PROB WITH THE GREATEST OR LATEST? CAN'T RELÉASE THE DOOFER FROM THE OOJAMAFLIP? CONSULT EUGENE'S BIG BOOK OF SLIMEY TIPS AND YOU TRUBBS WILL BE OVER...**

OOZIN' EUGENE'S S

To ooze or not to ooze, that is the horrible messy glop on the floor. Oozin' Eugene once more gets out his big book of dodgy doings and shows Jeremy Beadle who is more cunning...

Here we are again, with another pot pourri of excellent cheats to help those that haven't got the time to sit glued to their monitors all day, because they've just discovered other things like girls, boys, and aliens called Nigel.
And once again we see the format change a little, as the honours table mentions the tipsters of the month, with some of their ugly monikers, and the prizes that they've won, allowing for the tips themselves to be free flowing.

RANKINGS

Private Prat - A badge and a chance to clean out Scum city's loos with a toothbrush awaits those who get this rating.
Corporal Crud - A T-shirt is the reward for this honour, generally without the sweat stains.
Sergeant Slime - A free game on cassette or disk is for those who manage this rank.
Captain Colostomy - Two free games here.
General Gunge - Your tips would have to be absolutely stunningly wonky for this. If so you'll find yourself on a day out live role-playing with the YC team.

BEACH VOLLEY (Ocean)

Not a great game but never mind. When the computer serves to you 'dig' the ball towards your partner as normal, then run off to the left. The partner will help it towards you, but the landing cross should be outside the area. Let it land and the daft bug gives a point to your side. Easy.
On your serve the best thing to do is the jump serve, it occasionally beats the opposition (unlike the useless normal serve).

FLIMBO'S QUEST (System 3)

1. Of course the first thing to buy is the SUPER WEAPON. It lasts for the length of 1 life only though.

2. Buy at least one unit of time each level.

3. NEVER save up for a SUPER SCROLL. If you do, and get past a tricky level like 4 or 5, you will be confronted by an even tougher one, with barely any time or money. Perhaps buy a normal scroll or two later on.

4. Build up your money in the easy early levels. Some creatures (like the egg of level 3) always give you money, while some like the small walkers of levels 1 and 3 only give you it a few times at the most.

5. Be careful, when you duck, to release down before fire on bridges, etc. You could accidentally fall to your doom!

BLASTBALL (YC Tape - April '90)

1. For the later levels an enlarged bat is essential.

2. Be careful from changing from enlarged bat to being small (which can be disastrous).

3. When aiming a caught ball don't take too long or the ball will fly off on its own accord.

4. The laser can destroy otherwise indestructible blocks, useful for getting to others behind it.

DRAGON NINJA (Imagine)

1. The jump then kick is utterly brilliant for end of level baddies (all of them). Repeatedly use it and they won't stand a chance.

SCUM OF THE EARTH

2. If you keep using a certain movement, some baddies will get wise to it and know how to defend from it. Change your attacking movement now and again.

3. In the final level, on the helicopter, don't fall off or do a high jump. Similarly, don't go off the truck or the train, or there goes some energy.

4. Turn off the computer before the end screen comes up. It is so disappointingly pathetic, you'll throw up.

PIPEMANIA (Empire)

Here are some codes.

L5 - HAHA
L9 - GRIN
L13 - REAP
L17 - SEED
L21 - GROW
L25 - TALL
L29 - YALI
L31 - SHEL

TEST DRIVE 2 (Accolade)

Press 'G' while driving along to advance levels. The cheat does not work if you press 'G' while stationary.

X-OUT (Rainbow Arts)

Press escape while playing on a level when you have low energy and you jump to the next level's shop and start the next level with full energy.

IMPOSSAMOLE (Gremlin)

Get a high score and enter your name as JUGGLERS. Then play the game again and when you get a high score enter your name as one of the following:
HEINZ - For three weapon power bars.
ANNEFRANK - For a low energy top up.
LUMBJAK - For double length energy bar.

KLAX (Domark)

Start Klax as normal and select the first wave. Press CAPS LOCK and at any time during the game press SPACE. While holding SPACE down press 3 to skip a level or press 4 to start on level 100.

DELIVERANCE (Hewson)

To get onto levels 3+4, load them in after 1+2 and type in RJAARDGB. This enables you to start level 3 with 7 lives and 22 fairies.

To get onto levels 5+6, load them in after 3+4 and type in ASEFFNWS. This enables you to start level 5 with 8 lives and 21 fairies.

INTERNATIONAL 3D TENNIS (Palace)

When you are serving hit the ball too far on your first serve. The computer will usually miss the ball on your second serve. N.B. This cheat will not work in the finals.

NINJA SPIRIT (Activision)

Type VODKA on the title screen for infinite lives.

KENNY DALGLISH SOCCER MATCH (Impressions)

Turn off your computer before you throw up.

CHAMBERS OF SHAOLIN (Grandslam)

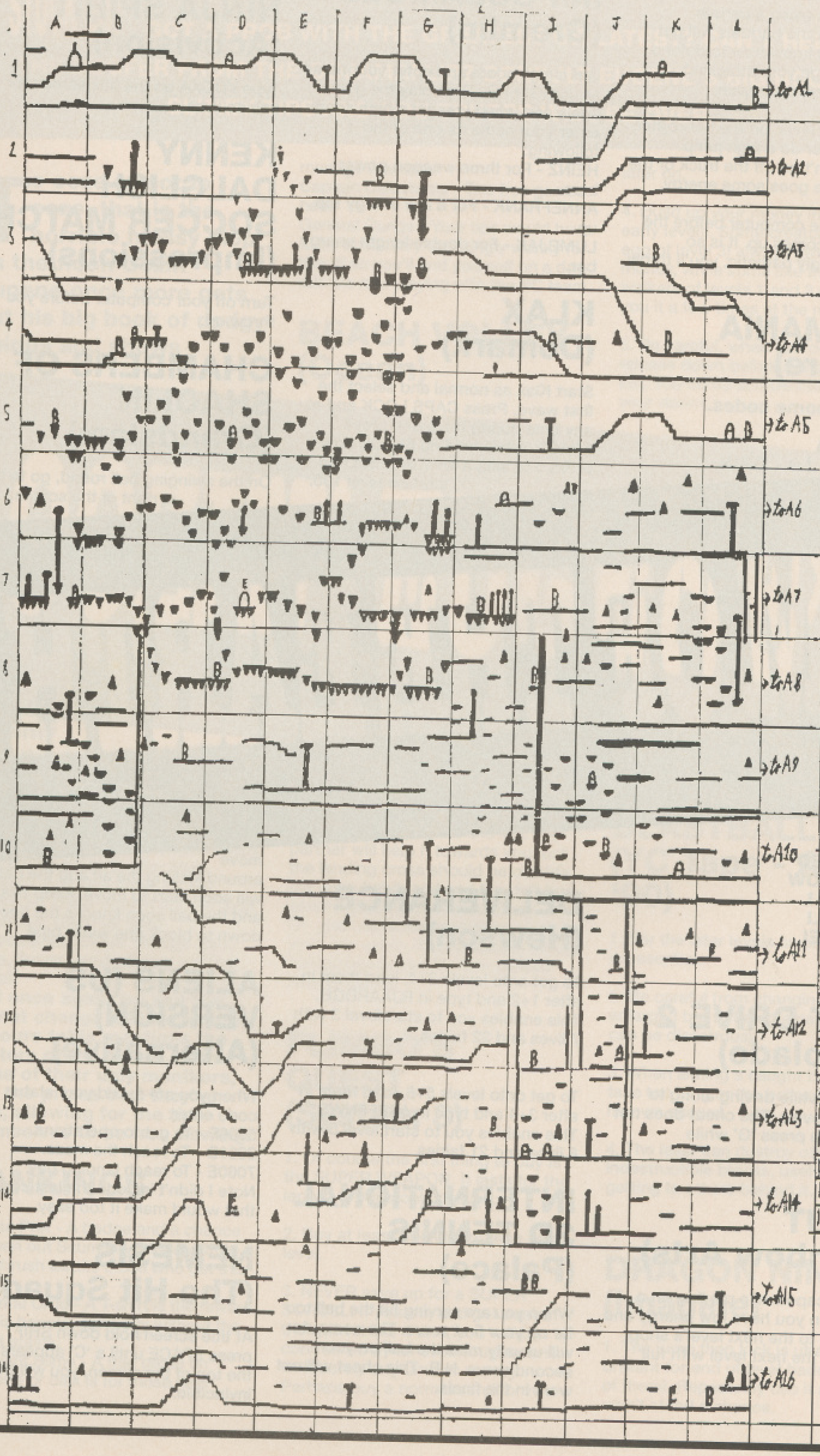
On the swinging ball round, go to the right of the screen, move around kicking the air and the ball will soon start to move. Keep this up and the ball soon knocks the door down to block one water pipe.

ALIENS (US VERSION) (Alternative)

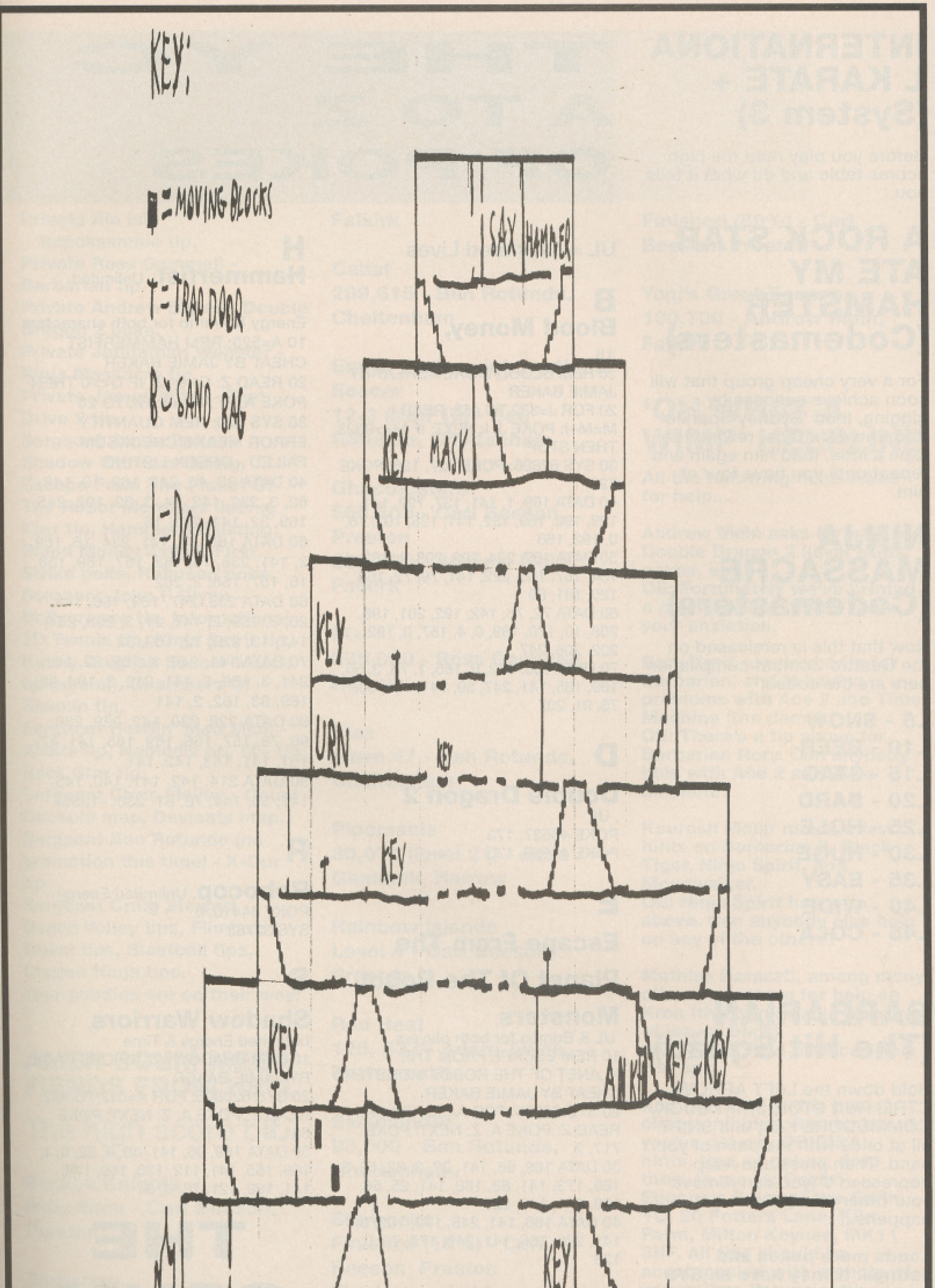
When you are asked your status code enter:
5506F - To get to operations.
9061D - To reach the maze.
7060E - To reach landing bay.
Note I didn't include the last code, that would make it too easy.

NEMESIS (The Hit Squad)

At title screen hold down SHIFT and press SPACE until a 'C' appears at the top of the screen, you will then be invincible.



1E	ASIMONUS
1G	XANTHIUS
2G	ELECTRIX
4C	DEVIANTS
7A	DIZZIOUS
6L	THETHING
7L	LEVELONE
5A	EXCELSOR
6A	CERBERUS
9E	TROLLDOR
10G	BASILASK
11A	CAGARANI
13J	METALDOG
14I	BADBLADE
12F	DENZIENT
12E	ZACARONT
15G	SALAMINO
15M	CHECKOUT
16F	CYBERNTR
16I	JABBTAH
10H	DIESPAZM


KEY:
■ = MOVING BLOCKS
T = TRAP DOOR
B = SAND BAG
I = DOOR
SAX
HAMMER
KEY
MASK
KEY
URN
KEY
KEY
KEY
ANKH
KEY
KEY
KEY
KEY
B

INTERNATIONAL KARATE + (System 3)

Before you play read the high scores table and do what it tells you.

A ROCK STAR ATE MY HAMSTER (Codemasters)

For a very cheap group that will soon achieve success by gigging, load 'Sydney Sparkle' from the data tape, rewind the tape a little, load him again and repeat until you have four of him.

NINJA MASSACRE (Codemasters)

Now that this is rereleased on the Quattro Combat compilation here are the codes:

L5 - SNOW
L10 - BEER
L15 - STAG
L20 - BARD
L25 - HOLE
L30 - HUGE
L35 - EASY
L40 - WIDE
L45 - COLA

BARBARIAN (The Hit Squad)

Hold down the LEFT ARROW, CTRL, RUN STOP, SHIFT LOCK, COMMODORE KEY, and SHIFT all at once with the palm of your hand. Then press and keep depressed V (you can remove your other hand)! See what happens...

Loads more pokes and listings. If they have an SYS number then you'll only need to reset your machine with a reset switch, if not you'll need a cartridge. If it's a listing, type it in after you've reset the game.

THE YC A TO Z OF POKES

UL = Unlimited Lives

B

Blood Money, UL

```
10 REM BLOOD MONEY CHEAT BY
JAMIE BAKER
20 FOR J=382 TO 453: READ I:
M=M+I: POKE J, I: NEXT: IF M<>9323
THEN STOP
30 SYS 62806: POKE 727, 126; POKE
728, 1
40 DATA 169, 1, 141, 137, 192, 141,
129, 192, 169, 182, 141, 128, 192, 76,
0, 192, 166
50 DATA 167, 224, 192, 208, 4, 162, 4,
134, 167, 169, 222, 141, 79, 72, 169,
120, 141, 80
60 DATA 72, 76, 142, 192, 201, 196,
208, 10, 170, 189, 0, 4, 157, 0, 192,
202, 208, 247
70 DATA 108, 172, 0, 165, 1, 78, 3, 50,
169, 185, 141, 247, 39, 141, 131, 50,
76, 91, 207
```

D

Double Dragon 2, UL

```
POKE 46537, 173
POKE 46553, 173
```

E

Escape From The Planet Of The Robot Monsters, UL & Bombs for both players

```
10 REM ESCAPE FROM THE
PLANET OF THE ROBOT MONSTERS
CHEAT BY JAMIE BAKER
20 SYS 62806: FOR A=564 TO 594:
READ Z: POKE A, Z: NEXT: POKE
717, 2
30 DATA 169, 96, 141, 92, 3, 32, 52, 3,
169, 173, 141, 88, 168, 141, 25, 56,
169, 240, 141, 225
40 DATA 166, 141, 245, 170, 169, 3,
141, 226, 166, 141, 246, 170, 76, 0,
128
```

F

First Strike, UL

```
POKE 38316, 173
SYS 2051
```

H

Hammerfist, Unlimited Energy & Ammo for both characters

```
10 A=520: REM HAMMERFIST
CHEAT BY JAMIE BAKER
20 READ Z: Q=Q+Z: IF Q<>0 THEN
POKE A, Z: A=A+1: GOTO 20
30 SYS 520: REM QUANTITY
ERROR MEANS CHECKSUM
FAILED - CHECK LISTING
40 DATA 32, 44, 247, 162, 16, 142,
62, 3, 232, 142, 64, 3, 32, 108, 245,
169, 32, 141, 233, 16
50 DATA 169, 61, 141, 234, 16, 169,
2, 141, 235, 16, 162, 157, 189, 158,
16, 157, 158, 2, 202
60 DATA 208, 247, 169, 166, 141,
20, 3, 169, 2, 141, 21, 3, 208, 254,
141, 13, 220, 72, 169, 32
70 DATA 141, 240, 3, 169, 82, 141,
241, 3, 169, 2, 141, 242, 3, 104, 96,
169, 93, 162, 2, 141
80 DATA 228, 230, 142, 229, 230,
96, 78, 157, 166, 169, 165, 141, 47,
151, 141, 143, 142, 141
90 DATA 214, 142, 141, 140, 143,
141, 56, 144, 76, 81, 230, -13557
```

R

Robocop, Unlimited Energy

```
POKE 44416, 0
SYS 32768
```

S

Shadow Warriors, Unlimited Energy & Time

```
10 REM SHADOW WARRIORS HACK
BY JAMIE BAKER
20 SYS 620806: FOR A=512 TO 532:
READ Z: POKE A, Z: NEXT: POKE
691, 2
30 DATA 169, 96, 141, 40, 4, 32, 0, 4,
169, 165, 141, 112, 135, 169, 173,
141, 199, 121, 76, 0, 8
```

THE SCUM

Here are the scum who contributed this month, along with their ranks:

Private Ala Isla - Impossamole tip.
Private Ross Gammell - Barbarian tip.
Private Andrew Styles - Double Dragon 2 poke.
Private Johnathan Webster - Ninja Massacre tip.
Private James Wilby - Test Drive 2 tip.
Sergeant Jamie Baker - Shadow Warriors listing, Escape From The Planet Of The Robot Monsters listing, Klax tip, Hammerfist listing, Blood Money listing, First Strike poke, Robocop poke.
Sergeant John F Glynn - Deliverance tip, International 3D Tennis tip, Ninja Spirit tip, Kenny Dalglish Soccer Match tip (ahem!), Chambers Of Shaolin tip.
Sergeant Howlin' Mad Mick - Aliens tip, Nemesis tip, IK+ tip, Rock Star tip.
Sergeant Chris Molloy - Count Duckula map, Deviants map.
Sergeant Ben Rotundo (no promotion this time) - X-Out tip.
Sergeant Craig Stewart - Beach Volley tips, Flimbo's Quest tips, Blastball tips, Dragon Ninja tips.
Your goodies are on their way!

ALIEN SCUM MEGA FIENDS FROM HELL

The high score bit...

Bankok Knights
Sally Siam - Carl Beeson, Preston

Barbarian
14,350 - Ross Gammell, Harrow

Batman The Movie
616,420 - Andrew Mein, Falkirk

Cabal
209,615 - Ben Rotunda, Cheltenham

Emlyn Hughes International Soccer
12-3 (skill 10) - Ben Rotunda, Cheltenham

Ghostbusters
$60,500 - Carl Beeson, Preston
$53,600 - Andrew Mein, Falkirk

IK+
588,000 - Ross Gammell, Harrow

Klax
Wave 17 - Ben Rotunda, Cheltenham

Pipemania
86,070 (level 21) - Ross Gammell, Harrow

Rainbow Islands
Level 4 - Carl Beeson, Preston

Red Heat
126, 833 - Adam Twine, Portsmouth

Salamander
93,000 - Ben Rotunda, Cheltenham

Starquake
Finished (18%) - Carl Beeson, Preston
The Untouchables
206,730 - Ross Gammell, Harrow

Willow Pattern
Finished (89%) - Carl Beeson, Preston

Yogi's Great Escape
100,700 - Andrew Mein, Falkirk

'OH WHAT A WIMP' HELPLINE

All the following have asked for help...

Andrew Mein asks for help for Double Dragon 2 (level skips, pokes, etc.).
OE: Fortunately we've printed a poke Andrew, that'll solve your anxieties.

Rory Brett required a tip for Barbarian, and is having problems with Ace 2 and Time Machine (the demo).
OE: There's a tip above for Barbarian Rory. Can anybody help with Ace 2 and Time Machine?

Kourosh Mojar needs a few hints on Barbarian II, Black Tiger, Ninja Spirit, and Moonwalker.
OE: Ninja Spirit has a tip above. Can anybody else help on any of the others?

Mathias Haraszti, among many others is looking for help on Kron (the cover game a couple of issues back).
OE: I'll ask Paul if he can help you out.

And that's it for this box of cheesy nibbles. Remember, if you've got any ORIGINAL hints, tips, or pokes, drop them to me at: Oozin' Eugene's Scum of the Earth, YC, 20 Potters Lane, Kiln Farm, Milton Keynes, MK11 3HF. All tips should be accompanied with a photo of yourself as they might be ignored otherwise. Amy that are unreadable will find a cosey home in the bin. Remember we need loads of high scores so send'em in!

DOMARK

£9.99 Tape,
£14.99 Disk

He's sleek, he's smooth, he's back, and he's got spittle all around his gob. Rik salivates at the prospect of playing the part of 007.



THE SPY WHO

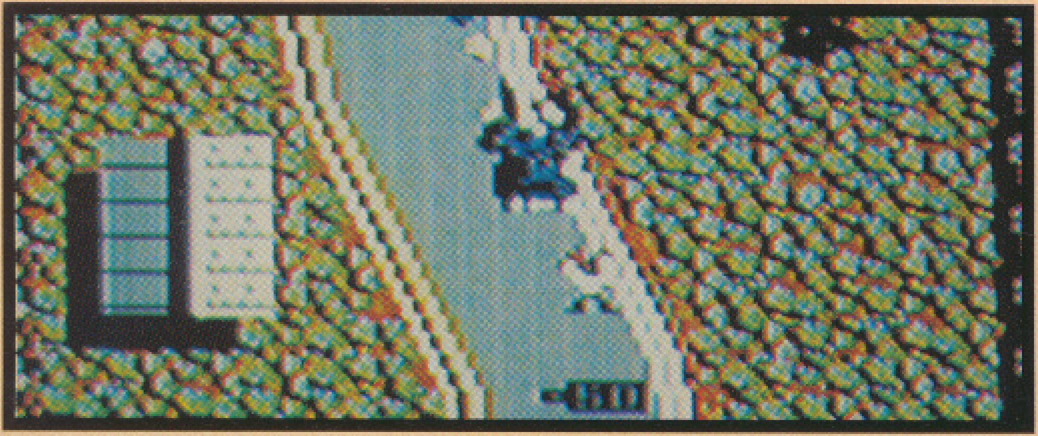
Okay I'll admit it. When I was but a mere seven years of age, my uncle and aunt dragged me down to a dodgy cinema in Hackney to see this movie. Just as I was getting into it the projector broke down and we were all ejected from the premises with our refunded money clutched in our grubby mitts. It wasn't for yonks and yonks that I got to see the whole film, and it's a bit of a stonker too.

It's a shame that the game isn't quite as good. This is probably due to the fact that we've seen it, played it, done it all before, and about six years ago an'all. You see, Spyhunter was a really corking game in it's day, and if it were to be updated it would need a fair amount of work to make it as good as the current batch of arcade games that are flooding the Chrissy market. The Spy Who Loved Me has more in common with Spyhunter than the word 'Spy', and unfortunately it is not even as playable as the ancient classic let alone being a vastly better version.

But you may not have encountered Spyhunter in the past so I'll give you an idea of what the gameplay is like. You are a car (or a boat, or a jet ski) and you progress up a vertically scrolling screen whilst trying to keep to the road, or avoiding the water hazards. You must also collect icons on the way ('Q' icons as it goes) and avoid the nasty enemy cars who are trying to stop you.

If you collect enough icons, you can roll into the 'Q' truck, that appears on screen every so often, and you can buy extra munchy things for your car. If you collect seventy five of the little buggers you can buy Submarine capability for your car, which allows you to access the shoot-em-up part of the game (the only variation in the gameplay). You must eventually get this, and if you haven't



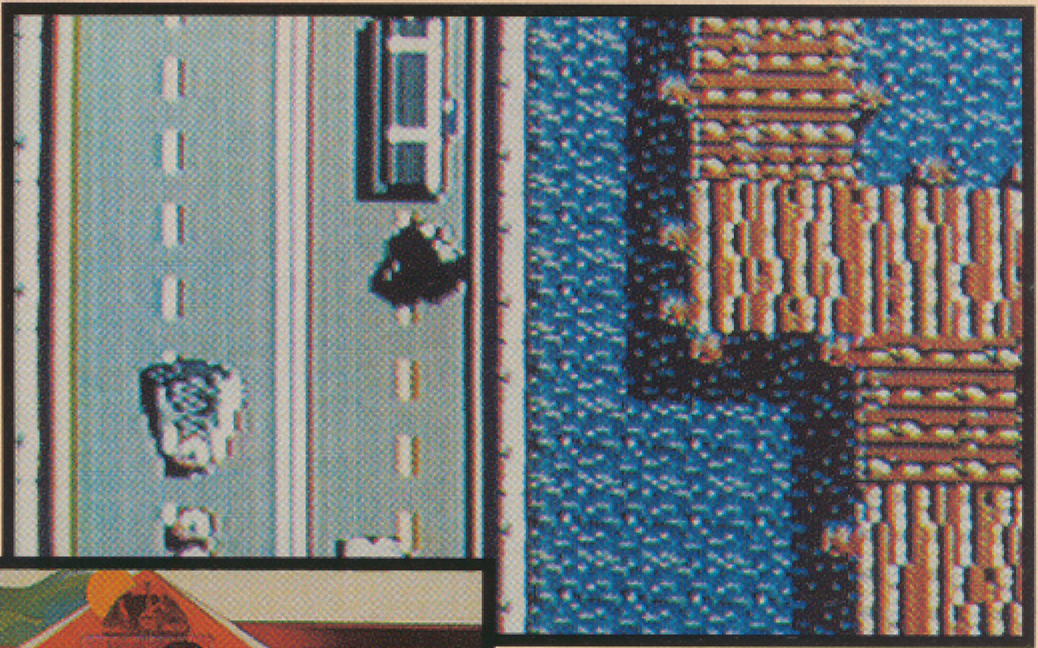


LOVED ME

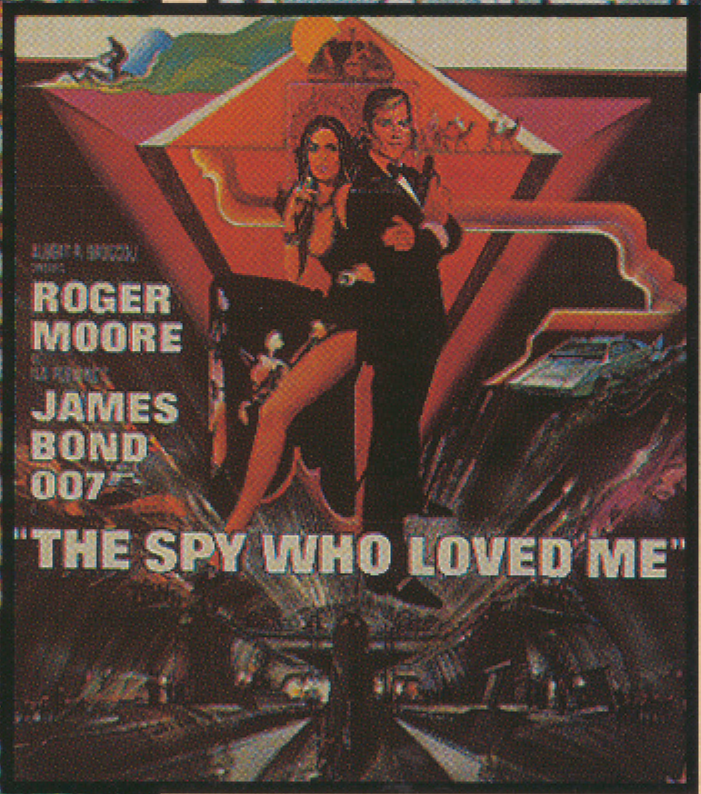
st
n't

enough tokens by the time the water entry post appears the road wraps around and you must continue going









round in circles until you do collect them.

It's based on the movie in a very shallow respect. The car sequence was but a minute part of the film, yet that is what the game concentrates upon. Although The Spy Who Loved Me is not a bad game in any definition of the word - the graphics are well-drawn though the scrolling is very jerky, the action is pretty fast, and the sound is boosted by an excellent version of the Bond theme, acid style - it is overshadowed by former Bond games (Licence To Kill, Live And Let Die) and this game has been done oh so many times.

Fax

Half Time Sub

Without 'Sub Capability' it is not a very good idea to drive your dad's Skoda into the Thames. For a start you'll scratch the paintwork, and you could be very embarrassed when the fish start cracking Skoda jokes.

Also never go around saying "my name's Bond, James Bond", unless your name really IS James Bond, 'else you may find your goolies on the end of some Skinhead's foot.

skorebox

7 8

9 7

overall 78

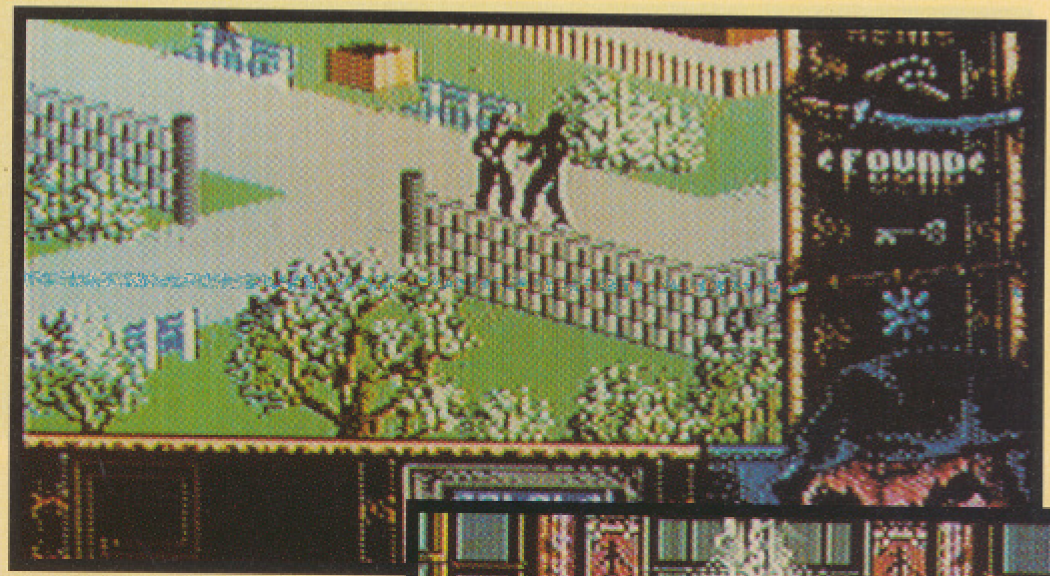


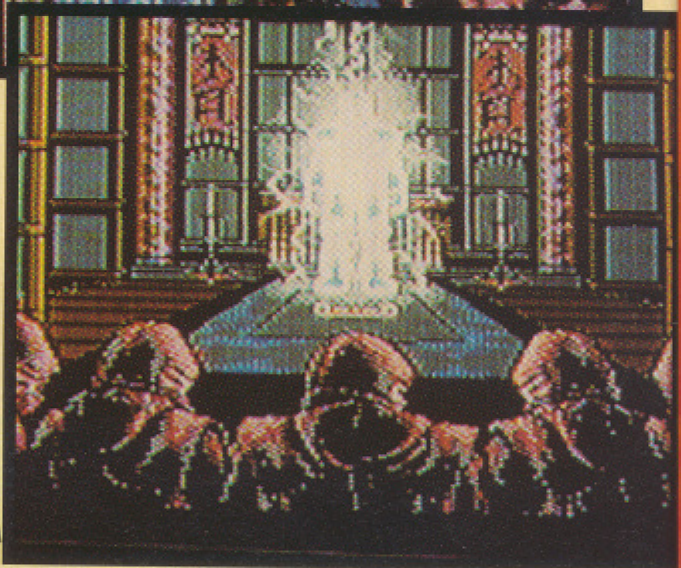
SYSTEM 3

£9.99 Tape,
£14.99 Disk,
£24.99 Cart

Ninja winja! High kick, low kick, smack 'em and leg it! Rik shows them toitles that they aint the only brawlers around...

NINJA RE-MIX





Now this game is not an entirely new one, we'll get that straight from the start. System 3 deemed that The Last Ninja 2 was mega stonkingly good game and it is not right that it has been taken from the shelves so that new commie 64 owners can't buy a copy. And that is the essential reasoning around the decision to release a 'tarted up' version of the classic, and owners of The Last Ninja 2 must not be confused into thinking that this is a new Ninja game.

YC FUN ONE

All said and done though, I'll review this like any other release 'cause a) we've never reviewed the original, b) it's absolutely stonky in every respect, and c) because I want to and I'll sit in the corner sulking until you let me... (Half an hour later, cries of "Okay, you can review it" come from the readers)... Sniffle...

The game was written in much the same way as a movie would be, and the plot was devised similarly, and you get the feeling as if you are really participating in the action as you see it. This is helped by the 3D-from-left-hand-corner perspective, which adds a new dimension (literally) to the tried and tested typical beat-em-up, and there is a lot of arcade adventuring to be done too.

You see, you are Armakuni and you've been swiped by the gods and placed in Manhatten (in a park primarily) so that you can hunt down the evil Shogun Konitoki and kick his head in. But all of your Ninja guile and wit will be called for because you've got no weapons whatsoever, and there's loads of police around that are on the Shogun's payroll, and they have no qualms about giving you a good thrashing.

Fax

Bare Facts
My grandad was so hard that he could kill a man with his bare feet, unfortunately he was beaten up one day as he was trying to get his shoes and socks off. (This is such an old joke that if we ever hear it again your ganglies will be kicked off by the Welsh rugby team - The Readers).

So you must explore the park to find objects that you'll need on your quest, while you are having a bit of a barney with the local constabulary, and eventually find the exit.

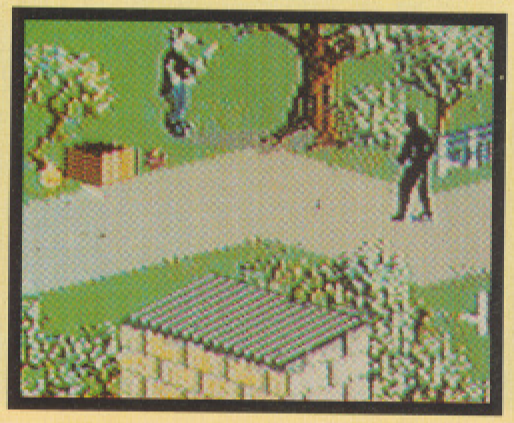
The game is in six parts (six loads on everything but cartridge), each of which with loads of enemies to be degoolied, and tonnes of puzzles, easy and hard, to be completed. Not only must you pick up the objects that are scattered around (some are well hidden), you must also use them at the right times, and in the right way.

The graphics are STILL incredible, and the presentation has been vastly improved - the game's intro is gorgeous. The Last Ninja 2, and now Ninja Remix was, is, and until The Last Ninja 3 is released, always will be the best arcade adventure available. It appeals to many different sorts though, so if you want something more than the average shoot-em-up you can't go far wrong with Ninja Remix.

skorebox

	10		10
	9		8

overall 96





4 FOOTBALL FANATICS
4 GREAT GAMES
SOCCER MANIA
COMPILATION
4 GREAT NAMES
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Gazza's SUPER SOCCER
FOOTBALL MANAGER World Cup Edition
MICROPROSE SOCCER
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MICROPROSE
Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.
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POST APOCALYPSE

It's time for munchy plasma enemas, for the moany gits anyway! PA probes once again the big bag of YC mail...

PAP GROUPS

I would like to say how great your mag is!! Well, I just did.

But not everything in the world is so great, I am sorry to say. When I buy my mag I expect computer things. Why do I find stupid pop groups featured in the mag when it's supposed to be for computers only?

Please do something about it as I buy it for my computer.

Tell any pop groups to go and see the producer of Smash Hits. Thank You.

Adolphus Okaikoi, Somewhere on this (or another) planet

PA: The reason you find pop groups infesting these hallowed pages is because if you concentrated solely on computer thangs your joystick would wilt and your pixels would swell. The occasional delve into the real world is a laugh too, n'est pas?

A QUICK POKE

I have just tried the pokes from 'Jeppo' in the September issue of YC. I am utterly furious!

This guy 'Jeppo' earned himself lots of goodies which you kindly sent him for a load of tips which just don't work. When I first saw his tips I thought "great", some games I have not yet cracked were included and I would have them beat in half an hour! But looking at the given 'SYS' address' I thought they looked like an unusual place to initiate machine code, I was right. It is pretty obvious this guy has just written anything, without even attempting to give instructions.

How can you permit this? He is bringing down the standard of your mag, confusing other readers and being rewarded in the process!!!!!!!!

Fair enough, I only tried six of his tips, but come on six out of six mistakes adds up to 100% rubbish. Is this guy really this bad or can Eugene not read? I am sure I speak for all your readers.

Howlin' Mad Mick, Sunderland

PS. Is Oozin' Eugene really Eugene Lacey from Zzap?

PA: Ooze says that he's looking into it, and his newly trained hacking hamsters will be vigorously checking every tip that we receive in future, so it's not worth sending in tips that you know not to be genuine. And no, he's not Eugene Lacey (ex) Zzap member, and what is Zzap anyway?

A FAIR KOP

Hello, you have never had a letter from me before. I'd just like to say that Rik is a good man cos he supports the skillfulest, undefeated, and the one and only team in the league, LIVERPOOL!

I bought YC last year and have bought it ever since, it is good. The tape is brill and well worth the dosh. The mag itself needs more tips and a clever contact page, I would be interested on starting the role. I have completed (print them on the CC page please (if you want one)) these games:

ZZZZ, SE KAA OF ASSIAH, ZAK MCKRACKEN, HOLY GRAIL, NEVER ENDING STORY, KENTILLA, CRICKET CRAZY, HOBBIT & FOOTBALL FRENZY.

Also can you tell me when these games are going to be released on the C64 please: Liverpool FC, Mean Streets, Indy Jones Graphic Adventure, Player Manager. I will be thankful.

Peter JR Laws, Enfield, Middlesex

PS. Do you think C64s (or 128s) will live forever? I think so.

PA: No CC page is likely, but Pauly babes has completed every adventure game ever anyway probably, so those that need help should write to him at the regular address. But your knowledge will be required if anybody should wish tips for any of the above games.

Liverpool FC is not likely to be released 'cause Grandslam went under (a shame really as Rik saw it way back in January and liked it a lot), Mean Streets is out (we reviewed it a few issues ago), and the others will never make it to the commie unfortunately.

PS. C64s live forever? Rik has just had to bury his humble commie in the YC back yard, and it was only an infant (but a mere six years of age) so they don't live forever, they all go sometime.

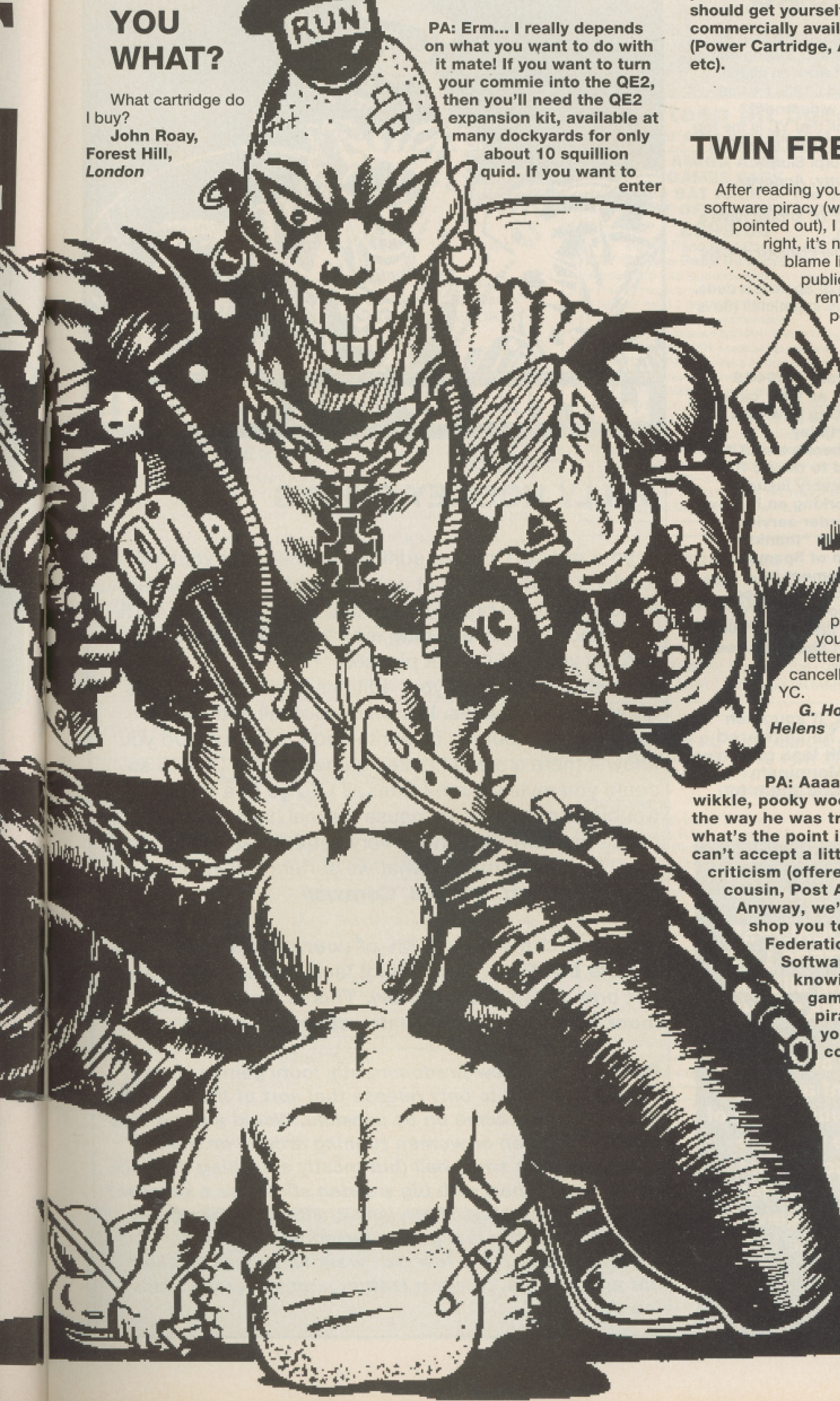


YOU WHAT?

What cartridge do I buy?

John Roay, Forest Hill, ***London***

PA: Erm... I really depends on what you want to do with it mate! If you want to turn your commie into the QE2, then you'll need the QE2 expansion kit, available at many dockyards for only about 10 squillion quid. If you want to enter pokes without SYS numbers, you should get yourself any of the commercially available carts (Power Cartridge, Action Replay, etc).



TWIN FREAKS

After reading your article on software piracy (which was well pointed out), I think you are right, it's not fair. I think the blame lies partly with public libraries, which rent games out, and people are copying them on twin tape stereos.

Also, when I write a decent letter to a magazine, I do not expect to be insulted as I was in your magazine (Oct - Post Acropolis, Multiloaderz...). It's no use putting a reply in your mag for this letter, as I have cancelled my order for YC.

G. Holland, St. Helens

PA: Aaaah, is likkle wikkle, pooky wookums upset at the way he was treated. And what's the point in writing if you can't accept a little constructive criticism (offered by my half cousin, Post Acropolis). Anyway, we've decided to shop you to the Federation Against Software Piracy for knowing how to copy games (how many pirate copies have you got in your collection).

SUPERMAG

I am writing to suggest that YC does a C64GS section, seeing that all the cartridges will work on all the ordinary C64s (and C128s for that matter) out in the wide world!

And also I think that YC is the top C64 mag available in the sprawling metropolis!!!!!! (Slurp! Slurp!)

Richard Jeremy, Andover, Hampshire

PS. I think that YC should have a mail order service.

PPS. The Purple Fishlord of Czar is strange.

PPPS. This tin of Spam is a dude.

PPPPS. You are impatient!! (So is Flamehead!!)

PA: So you want a C64GS section eh? Just as well 'cause in our brand spanking new look January first birthday extravaganza, there's about 10 pages dedicated to the C64GS, and likewise in every issue on.

PS. We're working on it. How about a femail order service?

PPS. Fishy says "thanks".

PPPS. The tin of Spam is on holiday at the moment in HAMburg, he'll be back soon.

PPPPS. I'm not THAT impatient, I can last about five seconds before I shoot the rest of the bus queue.

Don't forget, if you wish your letters to be answered by the man with less charm than Bernard Manning's groinal area, send them to

POST APOCALYPSE, YC, 20 POTTERS LANE, KILN FARM, MILTON KEYNES, MK11 3HF.

The winner of the Letta of the Munf award in future will win a copy of the game with the highest score that month, and every letter printed will receive a Post Apocalypse badge.



LETTER OF THE MONTH!

JOLLY HOCKEY STICKS

In your radical October edition I noticed that your YC reader's survey said that only 4.3% of your readers are female. Well I'm proud to say that I am one of the 4.3% who read this well ace mag, so I thought I'd write to you and tell you that I'm not pleased.

Nearly every one of your editions has reviews or ads about football games. I do enjoy football and I read these reviews but my favourite sport is hockey. Do you know if there are any hockey games for the C64? If so, could you review them? After all I do go to a real lot of trouble to get this mag 'cause it's real hard to get ya hands on down here in the very south west. Apart from that I think your mag is what we surfers call 'mellow'.

Emma Fitchett, St. Ives, Cornwall

PS. How come only 4.3% of your readers are female but 6.8% wear kinky lace knickers (and I am not one of the 6.8% either). This is weird and so must be some of your male readers.

PA: We only review predominantly footy games 'cause companies tend to only release that sort of thang. As for hockey games, come on be sensible. Would a game that features 22 men or women running around on a bit of grass, hitting a small ball (but mostly smacking the heck out of each other) with big wooden sticks, be a success? Erm... Yes probably! There isn't anything at this time though. There's a few games based on surfing.

PS. The fact that a few lads wear kinky lace knickers is not weird to me. I wear a leather codpiece, with studs (on the inside).

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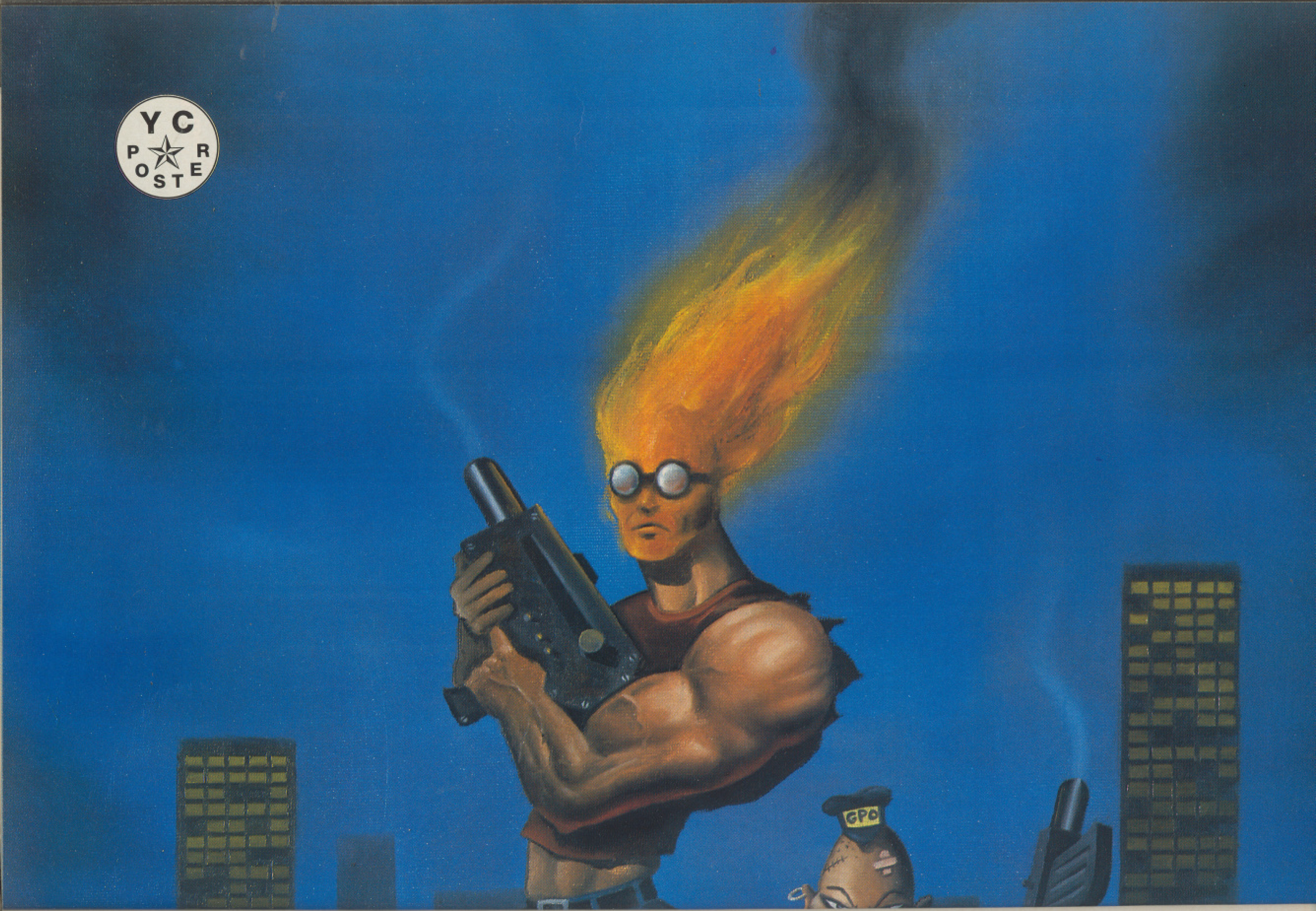
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THE SECRET ORIGINS OF
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"THEY SAID IT COULD NEVER HAPPEN!"
IN THE FLESH, BABE!
MAIL
LONG AGO, IN THE DARK AGES OF MAN...
... THE DEVIL DECIDED TO BLIGHT MAN'S DESTINY...
YAWN
WHO TURNED THE BLOODY LIGHTS OUT?
WHO SAID THAT?
OW, THAT'S MY FOOT!
HMM, I THINK I'LL BLIGHT MAN'S DESTINY TODAY. THAT'LL ANNOY HIM!
DARK AGES
ITALIAN COOKING
... WITH THE CREATION OF FIVE TERRIFYING BEINGS...
OW, I'M BAD!
GROOVY MAN
THE JACKSON'S
RETURN TO SENDER REMIX!!



WORDZ: DAVE HUGHES ★ ART: ALAN LATHWELL ★ LETTERS: RIK HENDERSON ★
WITH THANX TO ADRIAN BICKLESFORD AND APOLOGIES TO THE REST!!

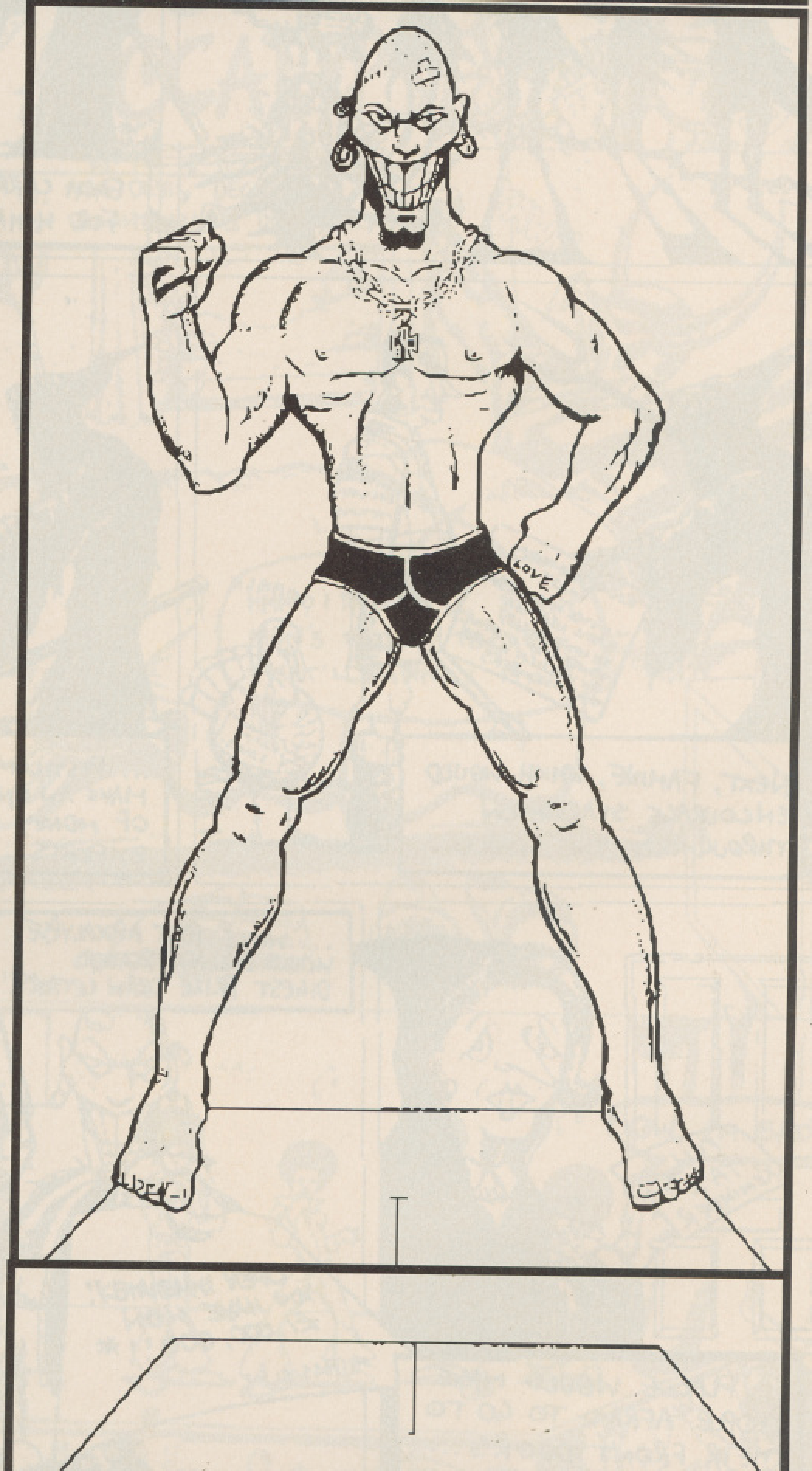
POST APOCALYPSE

CUT-OUT AND CLOTHE SUPERSTAR!!!

Photocopy Posty and all of his wardrobe and stick them all onto the back of a cereal packet or other form of cardboard.

Now you can stick the clothes on the maniacal mailman in order for him to avoid the cutting winter wind.

If you're so inclined, you can even get your crayons out and colour everything in!!!

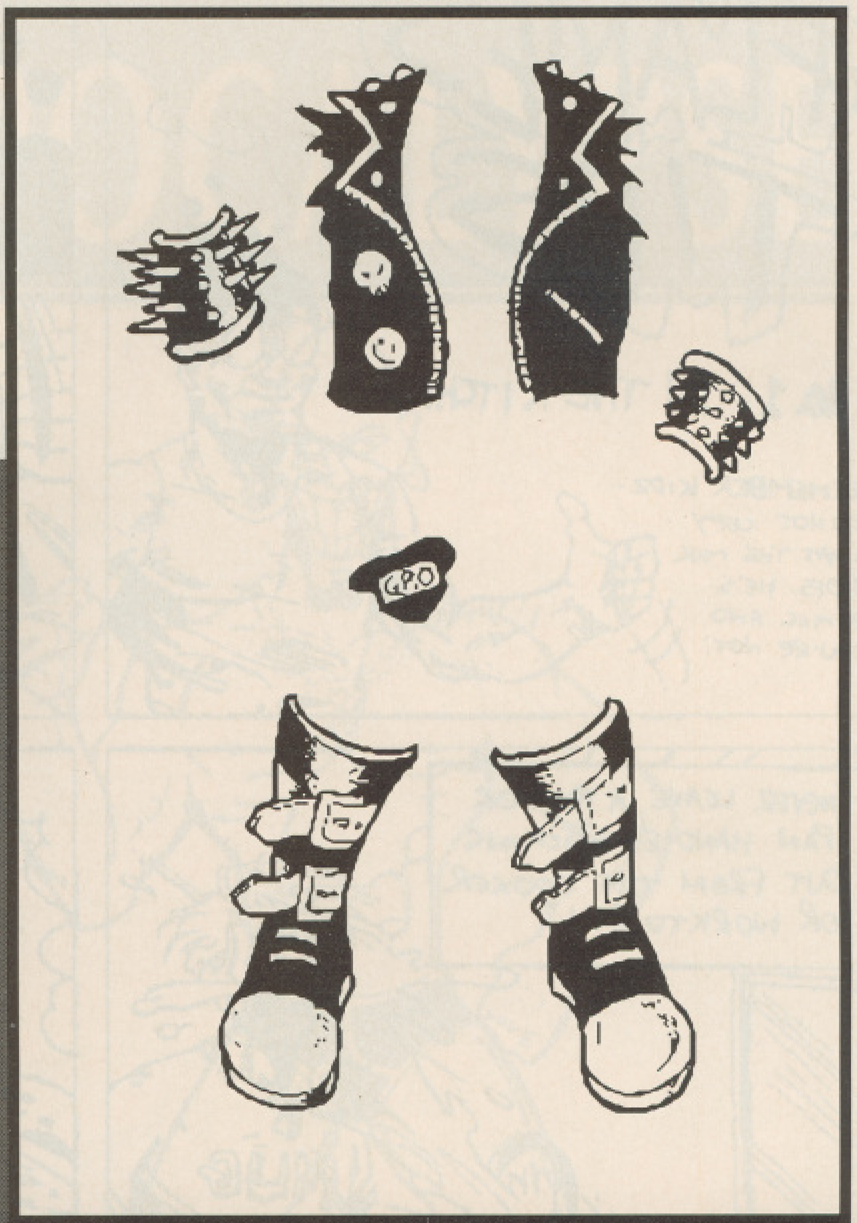


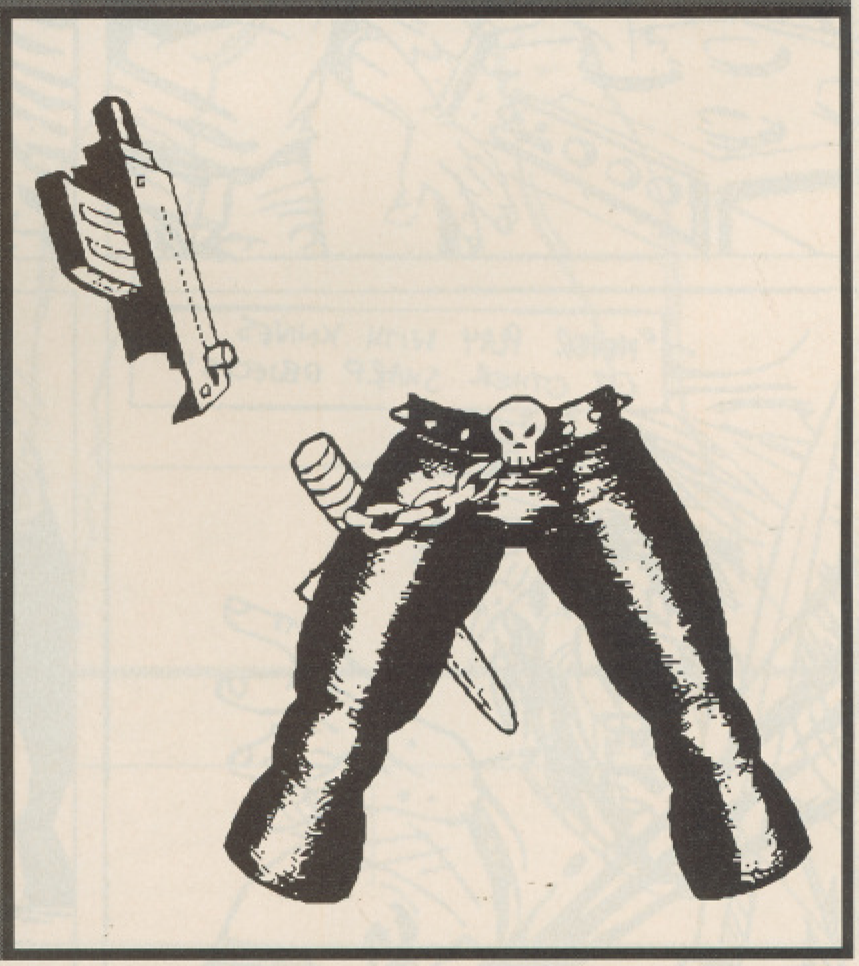
ORDZ AND LETTERZ BY: RIK HENDERSON ★ ART BY: CAM SMITH ★ DEDICATED TO ME MAM ★!!

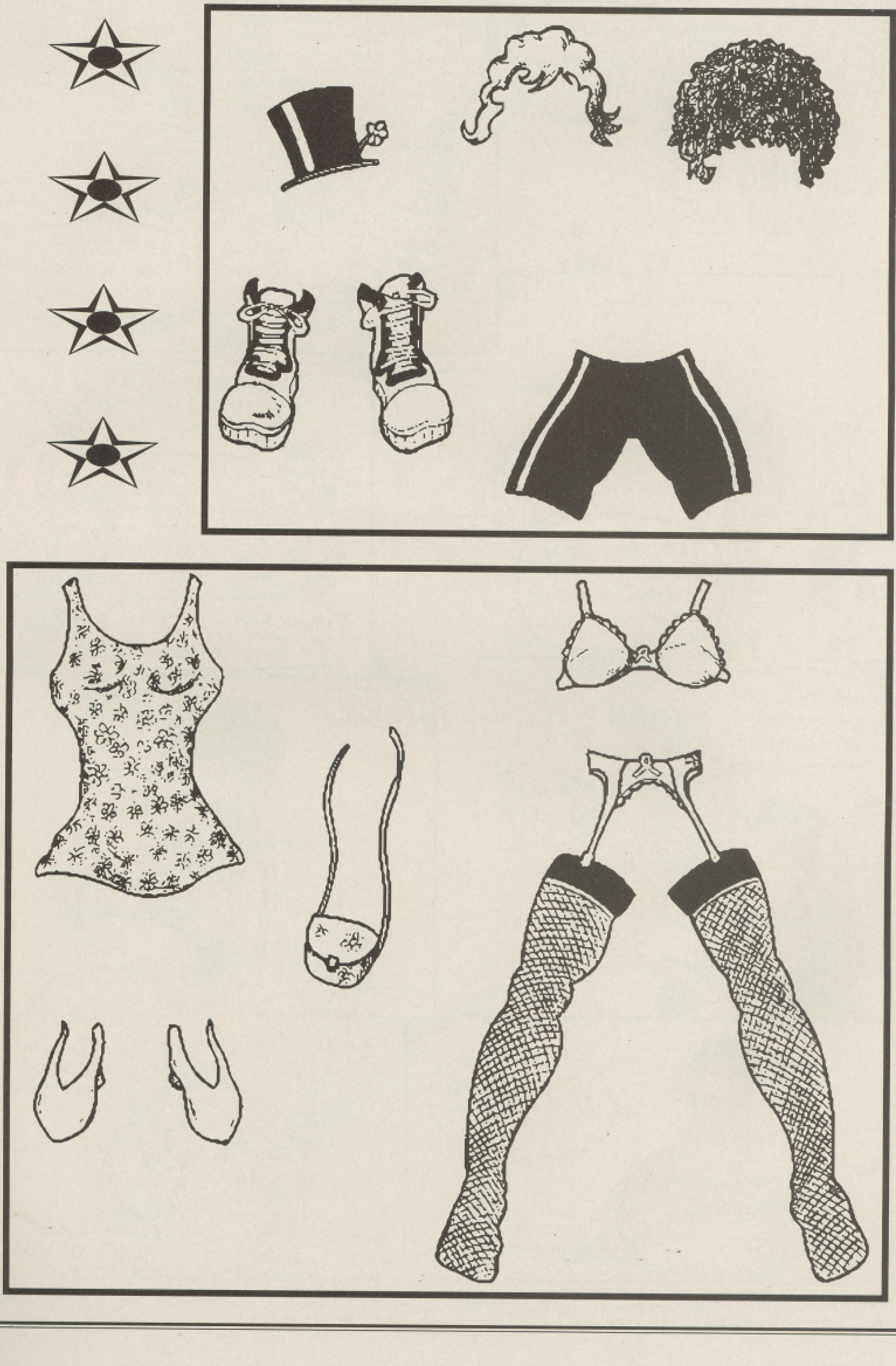


THE GREAT POST APOCALYPSE CUT-OUT AND CLOTHE WARDROBE!

If there's enough call for it we'll print more clothes at a later date, and even further dolls.









WORDZ AND LETTERZ: RIK HENDERSON ★ ART: ALAN LATHWELL ★

A LOAD OF THANX TO BEVERLY GARDNER AND ALEX BARDY, THIS IS **YOUR** STRIP!



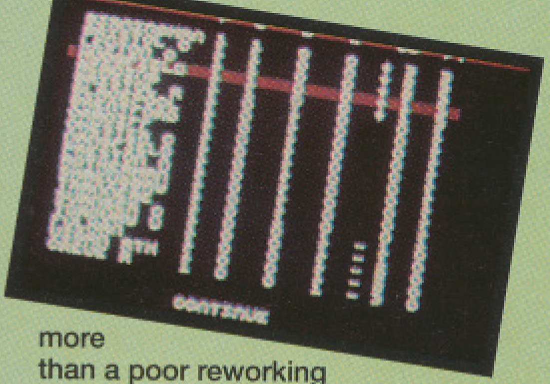
BARGAIN BUCKET

Rik casts his jeepers peepers over the latest games that can be bought for under three quid...

FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS
Cult
£2.99

We all know that Cult has made a name for itself with good football strategy games, but the formula seems to be wearing a little thin now. This is probably because the games that are now being released are little





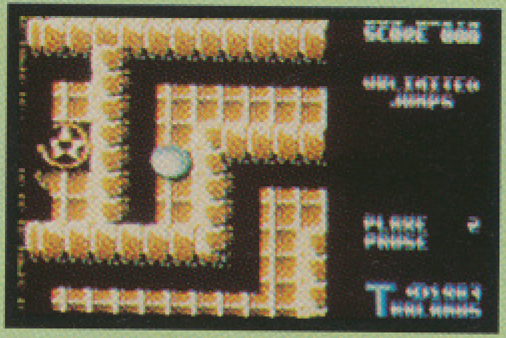
more than a poor reworking of D&H Games' (the owners of this budget label) Football Director, and as such are starting to bore.

This is stressed by the fact that Football Champions offers nothing new in the footy management stakes in fact it doesn't offer enough. There is only the league and the FA Cup as awards for a good manager and there are only three divisions in any order. Not only that but the updating of the games is a tad slow and the whole event is one big yawn!

If you're after a good footy sim, try Football Director if you're willing to spend a tenner, or if you only have three quid in your pocket, Cult has more than enough football games in it's range that are far better.

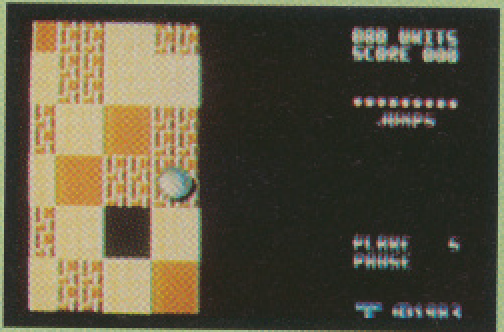
SKORE 47

QUE-DEX
Kixx
£2.99



This was first released, to much acclaim, by Thalamus, and was possibly one of the most original pieces of software ever.

It's good to notethat things haven't changed much. The game is still very original, and still fares very well amongst the rash of new think-em-ups. Que-Dex also calls for



lightning reflexes and sound joystick handling. But what is so different about it?

For a start you play the part of a ball, something that only small, unfunny comedians called Bobby have succeeded in before. And you must get from your starting point to the goal, although this is not as easy as John Barnes makes it seem. There are many hazards to surpass, and a clock that ticks down faster than a dodgy microwave. And even if you manage it, there are tonnes of levels to complete, some of which are very cunning.

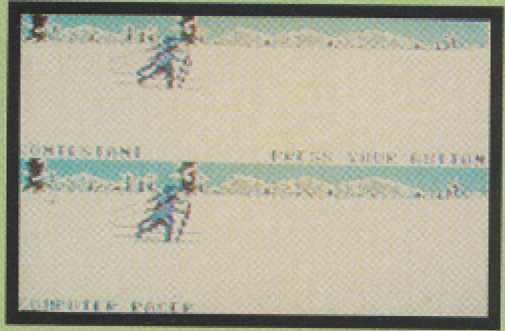
This is more than worth three quidies 'cause it'd have you hooked for weeks, and that's what you want from a game really, isn't it?

SKORE 97

THE GAMES WINTER EDITION
Kixx
£2.99

Another rerelease, this time one of the famous Epyx Games games,





although this is perhaps the poorest of them all.It was essentially an updated version of the best-selling Winter Games, and is very similar in concept. It offers eight players the chance to compete in an Olympic style tournament that consists of several different events, but unfortunately most of the separate sports in this'un are a little too hard for the average games player.

Mind you there ARE seven events to complete, all of which are based around winter sports, and there is a good mix of games styles for the more experienced games player.

The luge is okay, and the skiing games are reasonable, but the figure skating is bloody difficult, and not too interesting anyway. That said, if you've got the rest of the games in the range, The Games Winter Edition is a worthwhile buy, mainly 'cause you know what your getting. If you've never seen what this sort of thing is about, it'd be wise to buy one of the others in the range first.

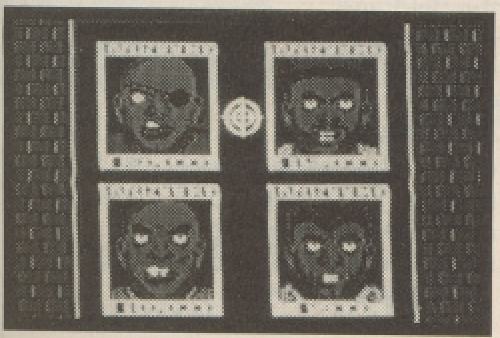
SKORE 76

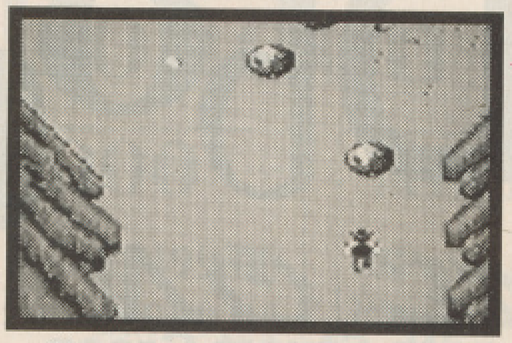
OUTLAW Players Premier £2.99

We've not heard much from Players recently, but thanks to a deal with Infogrames the label has gotten hold of an excellent shoot-em-up for rerelease.

Outlaw is very Commando in the first glance, but after a double take you realise that it's a rather generic vertically scrolling shooty, although it is rather a fast and smooth one at that. You get four levels to choose from, and you must wander up the screen, avoiding barrels and boulders and shooting the cheap hoodlums that lie between you and your bounty.

When you reach the end of a level, you are faced with the criminal that you were after and you must shoot it out with him in order to collect your dosh.





The graphics are pretty simple, but serve their purpose, and there are extra weaponry, shields etc. to collect on the way.

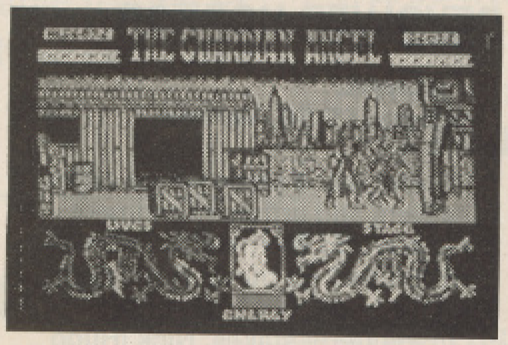
Well worth £2.99 if you ask me.

SKORE 92

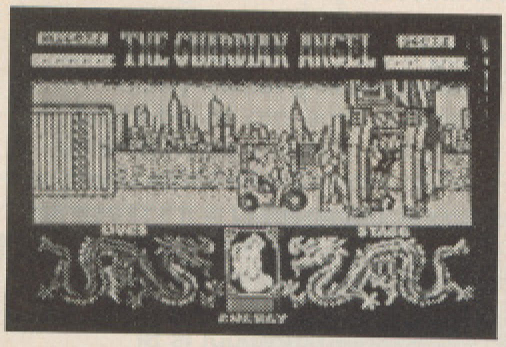
GUARDIAN ANGEL Codemasters £2.99

What a pile of poop, and no mistake. Shrouded in a thin excuse for a plot, you are a Guardian Angel in downtown Manhatten and you must beat the frag out of everybody, Guardian Angel is a small, neatly formed, turd, with little more than a rather nice plastic cassette box going for it.

It was first released abroad as 'Freddy Hardest does Manhatten' or



something just as ridiculous and it's not hard to see why it was never released as a full-price game in this country.



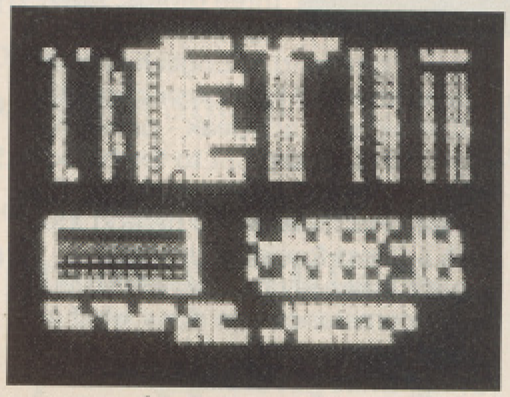
I may sound unfair but I don't see the appeal of a glitching character shambling along a badly scrolling backdrop and kicking the frag out of anything that moves, and that IS essentially it!

Codemasters has done so much better stuff in the past, and will do in the future. Guardian Angel has a halo made from a smelly brown substance and no mistake.

SKORE 16

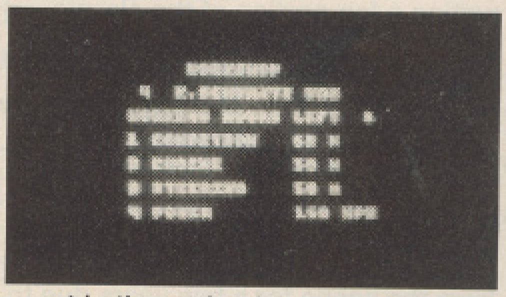
MOTORCYCLE 500 Cult £2.99

Another management game from the sport dedicated budget label and this is much more like it. You are the



manager of a motorcycle team, and must control two cyclists in the bid for team, and individual glory.

All the management options are required, but this alone would not make a game, so you must also take



a part in the racing by requesting when one of your team must go in for a pitstop (which is generally quite often).

The racers have skill levels, and the bikes have ratings so that winning is not totally random, and your actions will also have an effect on the outcome, ie. the tyre tread for the correct weather.

Although the races take a fair while to adjudge, and the action is about as interesting as you're going to find in this sort of game, the interaction is weighed just about right, and that's what makes a game of this type work.

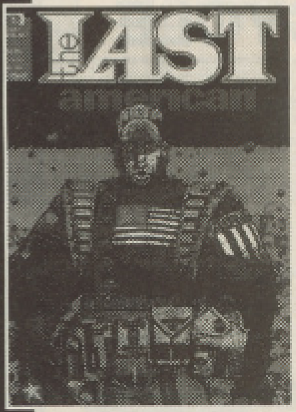
SKORE 85

OddBods

FLAME ON with Stuart Green

COMIC OF THE MONTH

THE LAST AMERICAN #1 of 3



Epic, £1.25, John Wager, Alan Grant (Writers), Mike McMahon (artist)

Tony Pilgrim's got a few problem. He's the only surviving member of the human race. For company he has three droids; Abel, Baker and Charlie whose command of English is limited to a bizarre and hilarious concoction of late eighties adspeak - providing an ironic counterpoint to the hideous realities of this post-apocalypse thrill kill kult. His mission. To defend the USA against foreign inurgents, except, there is no enemy to fight. In the circumstances he does what any sane man would; he gets screaming, raving, white hot drunk.

This latter day Pilgrim's Progress is brought to you warts and big guns 'n' all by three names what should be familiar to anyone who has read 2000 AD for more than two weeks. John Wagner created Judge Dredd, writing a fair portion of the classic stories with partner Alan Grant. And for many of Britain's bright young comic things, Mike McMahon, with his big boots and incredible hardware defined the look of British action/adventure comics. Take a look at Tank Girl and compare if you don't believe me. McMahon's been absent from the scene for a few years due to illness, but this is a startling return to form. The only shame of it is that The Last American, full of the trade mark black humour and subtle politics of classic British comics is published by an American company, denying you the chance to buy it at your local newsagents.

Zarjazz.

THE DEMON #5



DC, 80p, Alan Grant, Val Semeikis, Denis Rodier

Alan Grant is a professional. At present he's writing Batman, Legion 90, Lobo, The Bogie Man (with John Wager), and regularly contributing to 2000 AD as well as the above. Most of the above are recognisable for their smart ass, gin wracked humour, but this, a revival of one of Jack Kirby's lesser known characters sees Grant turning in the jokes with the empties.

The Demon is Etrigan, spawn of hell, imprisoned in the body of a mortal, one Jason Blood. Etrigan can only get free when Blood sleeps, which for the purposeds of the story is most of the twenty-four pages. We catch The Demon in mid-scheme as he attempts to lead his bad seeds in a mutiny and make bell his kingdom. Despite the promising cover line: "Ready, slime? It's showtime!" It fails to rise above the level of a rejected storyline from Nightmare on Elm Street:

Grant isn't helped either by DC's usual trick of saddling British writers with artists who haven't developed beyond CSE grade one.

Avoid.

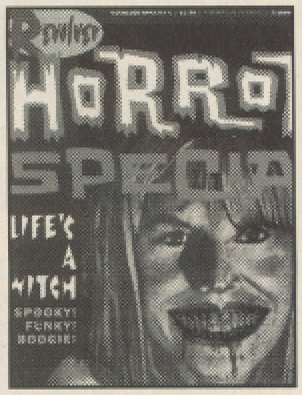
REVOLVER HORROR SPECIAL

Fleetway, £2.50, Various

Horror is the place where editors let writers and artists experiment these days so there's little in the way of things that go bump in the night here.

In the trade stakes, Nick (Hugo Tate) Abadzis' 'The Head', and Neil (Sandman) Gaiman's 'Feeders and Eaters' stand out. 'The Head' is reminiscent of Poe and gives a careful chill to the home as the mask brought from foreign parts haunts generations of a family. While Gaiman bumps into an old friend who is being slowly eaten alive by The Old Woman Who Lives Upstairs. The frightening thing is it's presented as autobiography. Neil Gaiman either has a strange imagination, or a few strange friends. You decide.

The other stand out is Si Spencer's 'First Blood' a tale of peer pressure and a young girl's first period. It's handled sensitively, but one can't help wondering why it's included in a horror special.



Altogether, the hits outnumber the misses, with only a couple of stories making you regret the South American hardwoods that might still stand if there had been a few less pages.

THE MAGIC FLUTE #1 of 3 (Eclipse)

P Craig Russel £1.95



This is adapted from the opera by Mozart, but don't worry, you don't need to know the music to get in the swing, if you'll pardon the pun.

Prince Tamini is sent to rescue the daughter of the Queen of the Night, Pamina, from the evil Sarastro. On the way he encounters the birdcatcher, Papageno, and faces tests designed to determine his spiritual purity. It's a classical tale, and artist Russel has a fine sense of the magic and wonder that is essential to any good fantasy, placing it way above your average Dungeon and Dragons scenario.

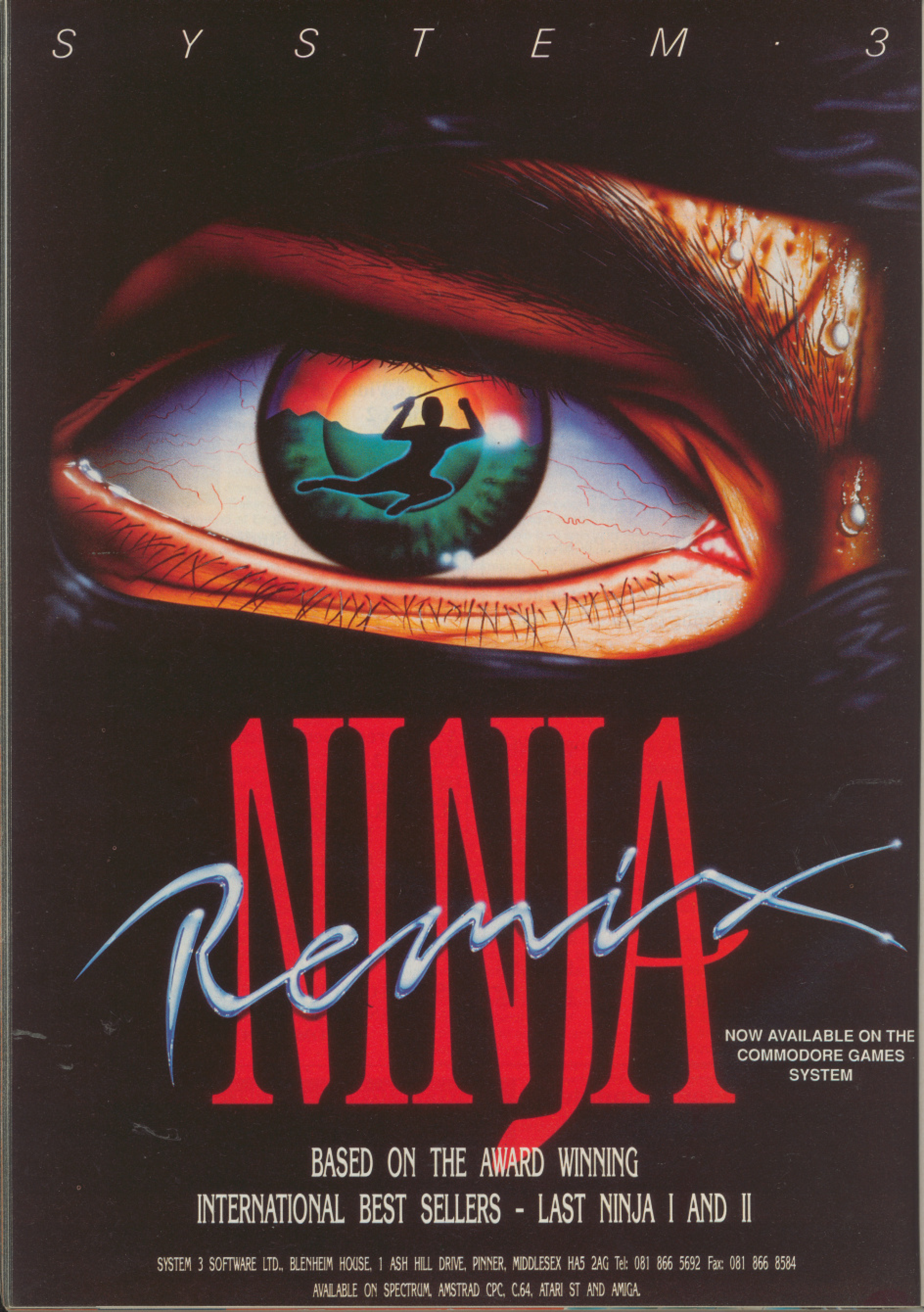
ALIENS EARTH WAR #3 of 4 (Dark Horse)

Mark Verheiden, Sam Kieth £1.25



This is a real stinker. After welcoming Ripley back to the field and setting up the storyline in the first two episodes with an ice cold chill that did no disservice to those great movies, Verheiden blows it with an alien cast of thousands that completely destroys credibility.

A real let down.


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CURSE OF RA

RAINBOW ARTS - £9.99 Tape, £14.99 Disk

What's small, got six legs and moves blocks around with its bottom? Puzzled? You will be with this new think-em-up from Rainbow Arts. Rik was!



CURSE OF RA

The current trend in software, for those who have been lobotomised from the waist up, is either puzzle games, or games with bugs in them. Curse Of Ra is original in the fact that it has both. Giving it its dues though, it is also very unlike most of the puzzle games on the market.

Why? Well, the idea isn't TOO original. You are a little bug who must slide blocks around the screen in order to match up two of the same kind vertically or horizontally, and they can be as far apart from each other when you wipe them out as you like. But you must have a block that you can step onto afterwards otherwise you are up the Nile without a eunuch. And when all the icon blocks have been destroyed you must end up on your starting block.

The reason why Curse Of Ra is unlike, say Puzznic, is that you can choose two different sorts of game, and although the idea is still the same, the techniques that you must adopt in order to complete the screens are radically different in both.

For a start there is the arcade game where you must race around the screen, eliminating blocks at a fair rate of knots, whilst the clock



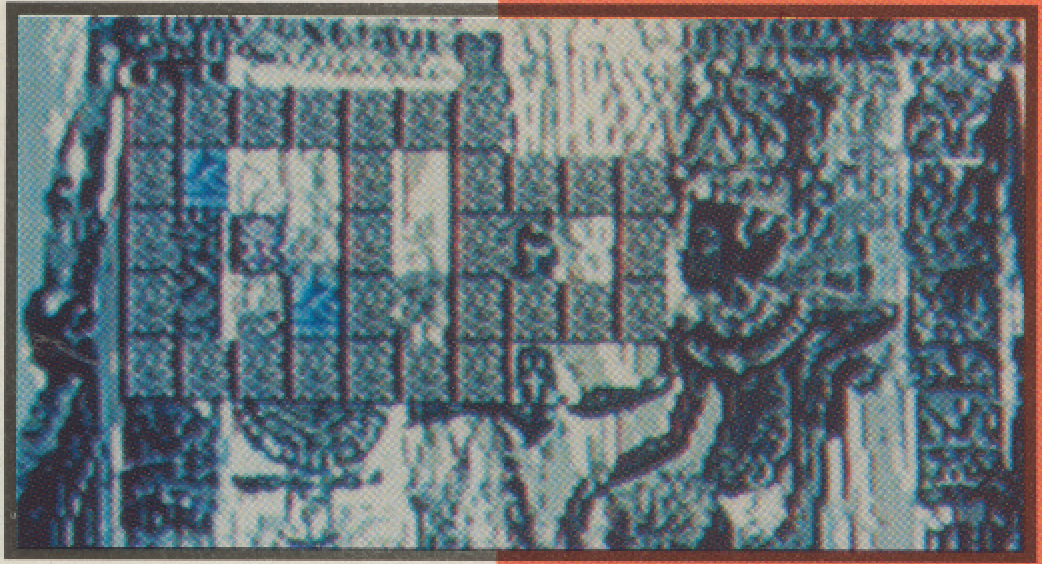
ticks away. If you stay on the block that you've just wiped out you'll disappear into a vast chasm and you'll lose one of your lives. The puzzle element in this section is not too complex, some of the blocks are covered in ice, so you can't change direction when you've stepped onto it, and there are some blocks that move by their own accord.

The logic section is for those that are not quite so agile, but the brain matter is going to be needed far more. It also has the ice, but the good thing is that each level has a code word, so if you get pretty far you can enter that word at the start and you'll be transported straight to that level.

Curse Of Ra is probably more involved than most of the puzzle games around, and the logic section adds a lot to the appeal of the product. Everything is hinted with an Egyptian feel and this increases the presentation of the product. One small moan though, the actual gameplay graphics are far too messy, and sometimes it is hard to distinguish between the blocks and the background, especially if your brain in busy analysing the problem. Ho well, it's not quite a Tetris or Klax, but if you take your puzzling more seriously then Curse Of Ra is the only game that I'd recommend.

Fax

John Lennon
Beetles have six legs which makes it ever so difficult for them to go ice skating. Not only do they have to spend loads of dosh on hiring three pair of skates, but by the time they've got them all tied up and are raring to go, the rink has closed down.
They are rather good at football though.



skorebox

5	8
7	10

overall 82

...it's dynamite!

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DEEK	INFO	TRACE
DELETE	KEY	UNNEW
DOKE	PAUSE	QUIT
DUMP	PLIST	MONITOR
FIND	ILOAD	BLOAD

RENUMBER : *Also modifies all the GOTO's GOSUB's etc. Allows part of a program to be renumbered or displaced.*
PSET : *Set up of printer type.*
HARDCAT : *Prints out Directory.*

The toolkit commands can be used in your programs.

DISK TOOL

Using POWER CARTRIDGE you can load up to 6 times faster from disk.
The Disk commands can be used in your own programs.

BLOAD	DVERIFY	DIR
DSAVE	MERGE	DEVICE
DISK		

MERGE : *Two BASIC programs can be merged into one.*
DISK : *With DISK you can send commands directly to your disk.*

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Using POWER CARTRIDGE you can work up to 10 times faster with your data recorder. The Tape commands can be used in your own programs.

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MERGE	AUDIO	

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C COMPARE	J JUMP	T TRANSFER
D DIS-ASSEMBLE	L LOAD	V VERIFY
	M MEMORY	W WALK
F FILL	P PRINT	X EXIT
G GO	R REGISTER	$ DIRECTORY
H HUNT		DOS Commands

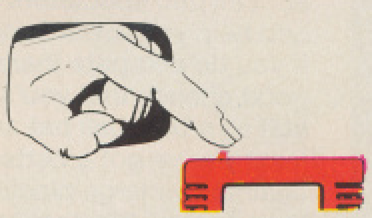
PRINTERTOOL

The POWER CARTRIDGE contains a very effective Printer-Interface, that self detects if a printer is connected to the Serial Bus or User-Port.
It will print all Commodore characters on Epson and compatible printers.
The printer-interface has a variety of set-up possibilities. It can produce HARDCOPY of screens not only on Serial printers (MPS801, 802, 803 etc) but also on Centronic printers (EPSON, STAR, CITIZEN, PANASONIC, etc).
The HARDCOPY function automatically distingishes between HIRES and LORES. Multi-colour graphics are converted into shades of grey. The PSET functions allow you to decide on Large/Small and Normal/Inverse printing.
The printer PSET functions are:

PSET 0 - *Self detection Serial/Centronics.*
PSET 1 - *EPSON mode only.*
PSET 2 - *SMITH-CORONA mode only.*
PSET 3 - *Turns the printing 90 degrees!!*
PSET 4 - *HARDCOPY setting for MPS802/1526.*

PSET B - *Bit-image mode.*
PSET C - *Setting Lower/Upper case and sending Control Codes.*
PSET T - *All characters are printed in an unmodified state.*
PSET U - *Runs a Serial printer and leaves the User-port available.*
PSET Sx - *Sets the Secondary address for HARDCOPY with Serial Bus.*
PSET L1 - *Adds a line-feed, CHR$ (10), after every line.*
PSET L0 - *Switches PSET L1 off*

POWER RESET



On the back of the POWER CARTRIDGE there is a Reset Button. Pressing this button makes a SPECIAL MENU appear on the screen.
This function will work with many programmes.

CONTINUE - *Allows you to return to your program.*
BASIC - *Return to BASIC.*
RESET - *Normal RESET.*
TOTAL BACKUP DISK - *Saves the contents of the memory onto a Disk. The program can be reloaded later with BLOAD followed by CONTINUE.*
RESET ALL - *RESET of any program.*
TOTAL BACKUP TAPE - *As BACKUP DISK but to TAPE.*
HARDCOPY - *At any moment, prints out a Hardcopy of the screen. Using CONTINUE afterwards you can return to the program.*
MONITOR - *Takes you into the Machine language Monitor.*

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DOMARK

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How come every Domark game at the moment has cars in it? This makes it very hard to write a decent intro. Rik tries his hardest...



BADLANDS

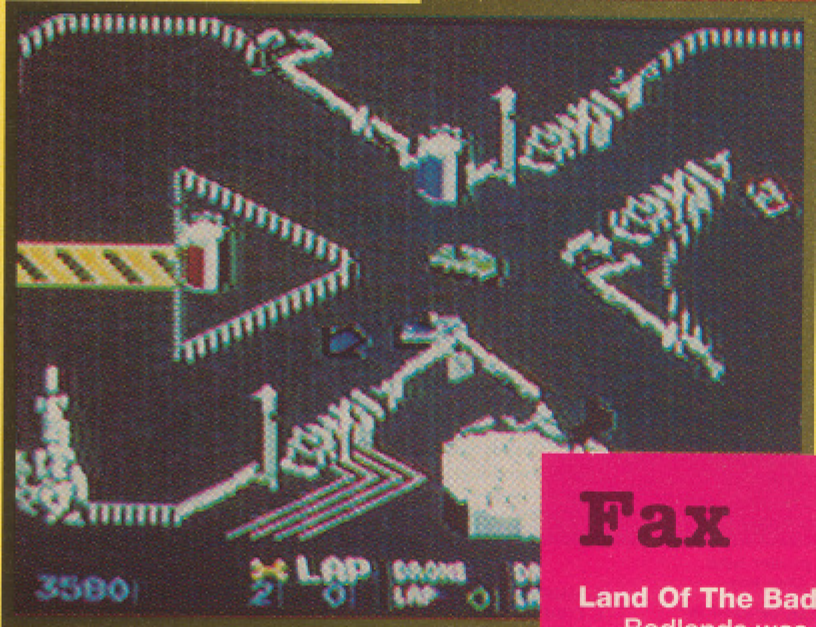
We all remember Super Sprint don't we? Well, the tin of Spam doesn't 'cause he's got ever such a bad memory, in fact his memory only lasts about ten seconds, so by the time I finish this sentence he'll have forgotten that I even asked him a question.

But getting back to the question, we do! It was such a classic on every other computer but our own, it's about time somebody made up for the amount of bugs, glitches, and lack of speed by doing something very similar that works. Domark took the responsibility to do so by acquiring the licence to Badlands, the official sequel to Super Sprint, and they've done a pretty fine job of converting it. The only problem is that the gameplay seems a little dull now.

The basic idea is this: You are the driver of a battered old wreck (Mary Whitehouse?) and you must race against two other battered old wrecks (Margaret Thatcher and Edwina Currie?) or else the post apocalyptic spectators may come and help you towards an early grave. If you do compete there's a very good chance that you'll end up as stiff as a baseball bat anyway, but at least you've got a better chance against two large pieces of metal than against fifty thousand muties with halitosis and four arms.

The action is seen from top-down and you must guide your car around the track, avoiding the pools of spilt oil (blood?) and water, and even the occasional time bomb. If you don't come first out of the three then you're in trubb, and it's goodbye to your head time, if you do you'll get the chance to compete in the next arena. Fortunately between arenas there is a shop that you can exchange wrenches although why somebody would want a few bints who'll cater to their every need (that's wenches, not wrenches! - The Readers)... Oh, anyway, if you exchange three wrenches





you'll be able to get a wicked add-on for your car (missiles, speed, better tyres, etc.) all of which increase your vehicle's ability.

Of course, if you want a better chance of winning, you can invite a friend to take over one of the other cars, and therefore you only need to beat one drone car in order to qualify. There are eight tracks in all, although if you complete them they'll wrap round with even more hazards and munchy things to avoid.

Badlands, a year ago, would have been a truly great game, but the theme has now been done to death and there isn't enough variation in the gameplay to compete against other, much more involved arcade conversions. It is the best Super Sprint game though, and if you're into them then you'd could do, and would do, a lot worse. Me? I'll be waiting for Domark's conversion of S.T.U.N. Runner.

skorebox

	7		8
	7		7

overall 82

Fax

Land Of The Bad

Badlands was written by Teque London Limited, who are a subsidiary of Teque Software Development Limited based in Rotherham, which is probably the only decent thing to come out of Rotherham ever.

If you were so inclined to do bad things in your car you would be liable to be nicked by a passing copper and probably end up having your legs broken by big, nasty crims who want your 'snout' (slang for tobacco), so it's probably not worth it.



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ADVENTURE

MISADVENTURES

This month we - that is, I - have a veerry special treat for ?

My dear readers - that is, you. Remember the very wonderful Bard's Tale role-playing game? Well, Bard's Tale 1 and 2 were written by a gentleman by the name of Michael Cranford for Interplay in the States. Something happened. Our Michael was either kidnapped by alien starfish from the planet Iveneverseenthiswomen inmylifeyourhonour, or he fell asleep in his cornflakes and lapsed into a coma or, and most probably, he did none of these things. Whatever, he disappeared. Blow me down with a 25 ton steel girder but doesn't he appear, running and screaming, shouting "hahahahahahaha", and clutching a copy of The Centauri Alliance, from Broderbund in the States?

Well, I managed to tackle Michael, ripped the game from his hands and hot-footed it back to the YC offices to give you an exclusive - sorry I'll repeat that - EXCLUSIVE!!! review of this RPG. Now, as Domark are the exclusive entertainment software distributors for Broderbund you would assume that they would bring the game over here - or then again, they might not. Depends how they're feeling, I suppose.

Okay, a bit of plot background is called for here, I reckon (Cue galactic Star Wars-type sounds from the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra).

It was when two other lifeforms were discovered on Alpha Centauri by a team from Earth that the Alliance was initiated. Technology was shared, ideas passed around, other alien races discovered. During AD 2214 six races officially formed the Centauri Alliance. Although a wish for peace predominated chaos still reigned throughout the galaxy.

Now it appears that an unfriendly lot, calling themselves DAYNAB, are searching for the "ultimate weapon", the Fractyr Fist. This nasty piece of work is spread across the galaxy in its basic components. The aim of the game, therefore, is to retrieve the bits of the Fist before the agents of DAYNAB do. If DAYNAB succeed...



Coming on three disks, two manuals, a map and reference cards and adopting a familiar "Bard's Tale" look, The Centauri Alliance (TCA) employs a multi-window play-screen. Top centre is the window onto the game-world. A first person perspective viewpoint that scrolls in a similar manner to Bard's Tale. To the right of that is a list of your party of six characters (NPCs can be recruited too). Each character can be one of six races, each with their own abilities (eg: technical and psionic) plus a set of six stats: strength, vitality, agility, IQ, life and psionic. Psionics is mental energy that replaces magic seen in Bard's Tale. It is handled in a similar way, though. You "cast" a psionic ability as you would a spell. So you can create creatures to fight for you, cause earthquakes, detect the presence of radiation and so on.

An excellent aspect of each character's make-up (no, not lippy) is the Skill option. Each character is rated (0-10) for four basic disciplines: Combat, Tech, Psionics and Metamorph. Within each discipline are one to four skills. So the Combat

discipline contains melee (close quarters), thrown (hurling knives and explosives), sidearm and master (an extension of the other three). Incidently, metamorph is the intriguing description of being able to change a character's physical shape into one of several lifeforms.

Obviously, if certain problems require a certain skill you'll pick the most proficient character to complete it. So, for example, if you need to repair a mechanoid robot you'll choose the guy with a high "hardware" skill (found in the Tech discipline).

Items are plentiful. Weapons range from the ubiquitous dagger to shurikens, UZIs, photon blasters, poison-tipped celery sticks, first-class stamps with a superglue coating on the back (get your tongue around that one!) and lots of other bits. Armour ranges from combat and duro-fabric to kevlar nappies and re-enforced upper-lip protectors (ok, ok - not all of those items are included). There are umpteen artifacts to be found in the game, too.

But back to the game-screen description. To the top-left of the screen is a window containing menu choices and long-lasting psionic abilities (eg: light creation). The large window on the lower half of the screen displays text messages.

The game area consists of eleven worlds, each with their own characteristics. Each world is arranged in a similar way to Bard's Tale, ie: on a square grid maze system. You will need to travel between worlds to complete a variety of missions that must be solved before the final mission of finding the Fist is attempted.

As you might of guessed. If you enjoyed Bard's Tale you'll love Centauri Alliance. However, if you didn't then...er, you won't. The graphics are quite nice, if a little repetitive in certain areas. Spot animation is plentiful, though. Sound is minimal.

The actual RPG system is not exactly ground breaking but it does vastly improve on the Bard's Tale series with the addition of skills and the unique combat interface. When this occurs you are transported over to a combat screen depicting a bunch of enlarged hexes. Standing on the hexes are your party and the enemy (each party is portrayed as one character). This hex-view gives you a chance to contemplate tactical manoeuvres and the like.

The bottom line? A good solid RPG with lots and lots of gameplay that'll be enjoyed by any RPG player but is a "must buy" for Bard's Tale fans.

RATING - 81

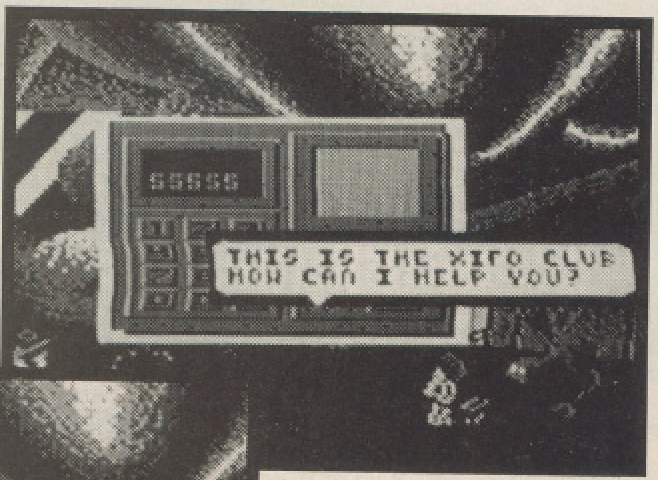
If you don't want to wait for Domark (and why should you, eh?) you can buy The Centauri Alliance now from:

COMPUTER ADVENTURE WORLD, 318 KENSINGTON, LIVERPOOL, L7 0EY. TEL: 051-263-6306

REVIEW

GAME - BAT
PRODUCER - UBISOFT
PRICE - £19.99 DISK

BAT (The Bureau of Astral Troubleshooters) is a RPG from French software house, Ubisoft. You play an agent of BAT, on the trail of the dastardly Vrangor and his accomplice, Josua Munewski.





BAT is joystick controlled, using icons and menus for menu choices. Competentaces and skills form the meat of your character's development. However, these categories (evaluate, vigilance, etc) are rather too subtle and advanced to be noticed in the rather simple game design that BAT has.

There is a variety of equipment that you can utilise on your travels. For example there is the Voktrasor, a light weapon the size of a pen that can be easily hidden and the Hacker 30 - described as a "butcher's weapon". No surprise really, as this nasty piece of work projects several thousand needles!

When combat occurs the screen changes to a full-screen image of your opponent. The game allows you to arm yourself and trigger your magnetic field protection. After which, you move the cursor over the opponent and click on the mouse button like crazy.

One major criticism is that there is far too much eating and drinking! It seems that, every five seconds, your character complains "I'm hungry/thirsty". Which interrupts play too frequently.

I also became confused with the method of moving from one location to another. Each location takes the form of one full-screen graphic. When you wish to move to another location you move the cursor around the screen edge until it changes into an arrow. Click and a new graphic location appears. I was never aware of moving east, west, etc. Consequently, I often found myself moving to the wrong area, moving back to the original screen and then selecting the correct direction. A bore on the C64 as the graphic screens take time to load from disk. I would have much preferred some sort of compass rosette as a replacement. Then, at least I would have some idea as to what direction I was travelling in!

Graphics are well presented and the background music is pretty good on the C64. Spot effects are minimal, though.

Good idea, but BAT suffers from a poor interface and inadequate design.

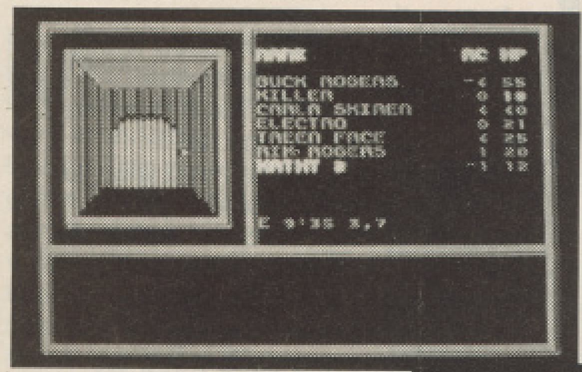
RATING - 58

GAME - BUCK ROGERS VOL.1 - COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY

PRODUCER - SSI/ US GOLD

PRICE - £24.99 DISK

Basically the plot to Buck Rogers surrounds the RAM (Russo-American Mercantile) organization based on Mars. They want to



control the Solar System, your task is to stop them by leading the NEO (New Earth Organization)

Using an uprated AD&D system Buck Rogers displays many improvements. The complex skill system being the most influential.

Attributes hold one surprise. "Tech" measures a character's technical knowhow. Character classes, as in the fantasy genre, may only have certain careers. The available careers are interesting and varied. Rocketjocks and engineers mix with rogues and warriors.

It is the skill system that provides the heart to the game and the qualification for each career, via minimum skill values. Rocketjocks can, for example, pilot a fixed wing, a rocket, etc. General skills are also included. They are listed as `extra curricular' in the manual. During character creation and level increases you are able to allocate points to any skill you have. Skills have a direct influence in the game. Leadership skills may attract NPCs into the party during combat sequences, for example.

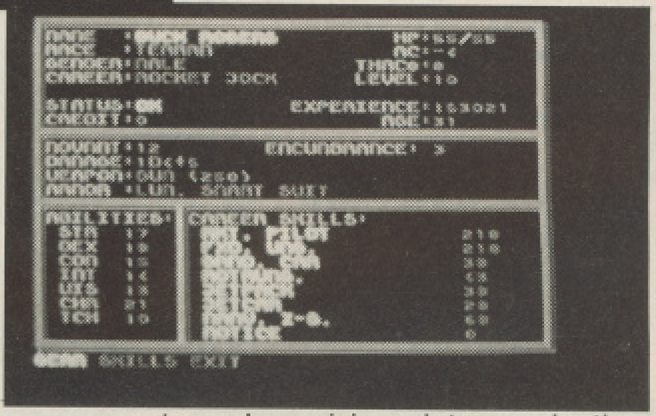
Combat uses the usual raised-



side-view - ideal for tactical play. Combat is divided into `segments'. Each segment includes a detailed array of variables such as performance in zero-g manoeuvering, tactics, initiative and so on. Terrain can be used during tactical play which aids the tactical realism.

Space combat is also available and includes boarding and salvage as options. Many of the menu options are similar in their effects to the AD&D menu system, with modifications such as a bar/restaurant instead of the tavern, for example. Extra facilities such as using the library skill to find info is integrated well.

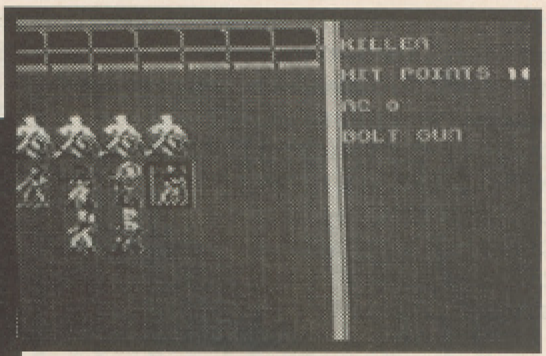
The skill system integrates smoothly into the high-tec SF



atmosphere giving a lot more depth to gameplay. Each of your characters appear more as `individuals' rather than just an assortment of a few re-rolled stats such as charisma and strength.

As time is passing we are seeing RPGs separate into many sub-groups, none of which should be directly compared to each other as they all occupy their own little niches and strive for different objectives. Some RPGs are pure hack'n slash (Bard's Tale) while others rely on interaction to succeed (the later Ultimas). Buck Rogers depends on tactical combat to win the game.

As such, the combat is excellent and will be enjoyed by tacticians everywhere. Also because of the large amount of detail



provided for each character (both in normal play and during combat) the game quickly becomes absorbing and addictive. Consequently, Buck Rogers is the finest "tactical" RPG on th market.

RATING - 92

ADVENTURE MAG ROUND-UP PT.3

Up in the nether regions of Bonnie Scotland - Glenrothes, Fife to be exact, is a helpful chappie by the name of Mike "Bonnie" Brailsford. Soooo helpful is our Bonnie Mike that he edits a bonnie mag called Spellbreaker. Sooo wonderful is Spellbreaker that I must insist that you buy a copy. In fact buy three - one to carry around in your jacket, nail one to the loo door to read during times of contemplation and another to the chimney stack if ever you find yourself fixing the roof and suddenly find that you've forgot to bring your jacket. Happens to me all the time.

Spellbreaker is jam packed with hints, tips, solutions and maps for just about every adventure under the sun, under the bed and under the arches. Oh - and then there's lots of Bonnie Brailsford too, plus letters, the odd (literally) story and features. Value for money or what?!? Mike also offers a solution service in which, for a nominal fee, you can request a whole host of adventure solutions and maps.

Spellbreaker (an A5 size mag including around 40 pages - if you count the cover) can be purchased for a piffling £1.50. If you would like a subscription just multiply that by 12. European readers should pay £2.00 per issue as should the rest of the world using surface mail. Air Mail (rest of world) costs £3.00 per issue.

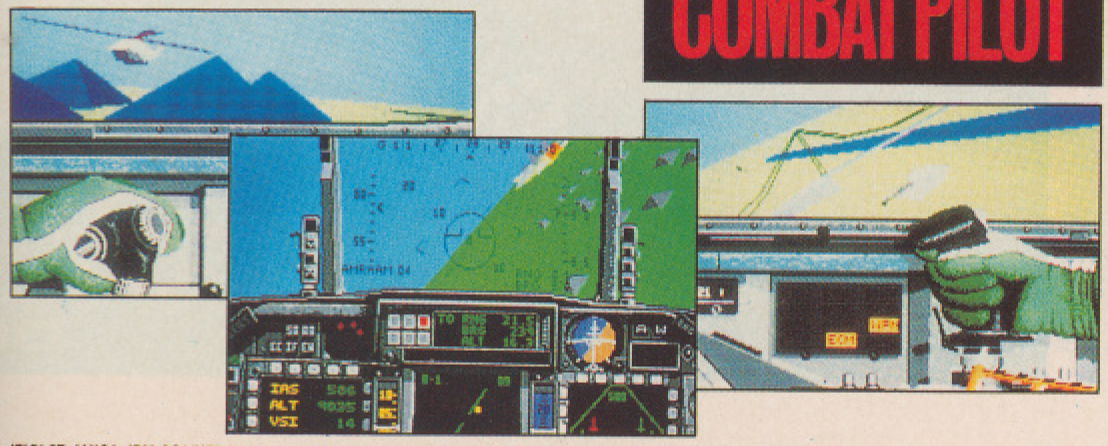


I'm primed for action as my F-16 leaves the runway. This time my mission is to destroy a battalion of tanks. Suddenly, threat warning – interceptors closing fast! I quickly select dogfight mode and arm a Sidewinder. We both fire at the same time – chaff and a high-g turn out manoeuvres his missile. A loud explosion tells me he's not so lucky.

F-16 COMBAT PILOT

Flying fast and low, I turn my F-16 towards my target. Time to switch on the ground radar and arm the laser-guided Mavericks. I fire six missiles in quick succession, Lantirn automatically locking on to each tank. With flak bursting around me I dive for cover and head for home. Approaching base, I contact the tower and request a talkdown for my night landing.

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CREAT

THALAMUS

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Something incredibly cute is coming your way...

Well, last month you had the preview, here's the review. Creatures are still incredibly cute. What's more they are very cuddly, very colourful and very likely to be very dead if you don't rescue them very fast!

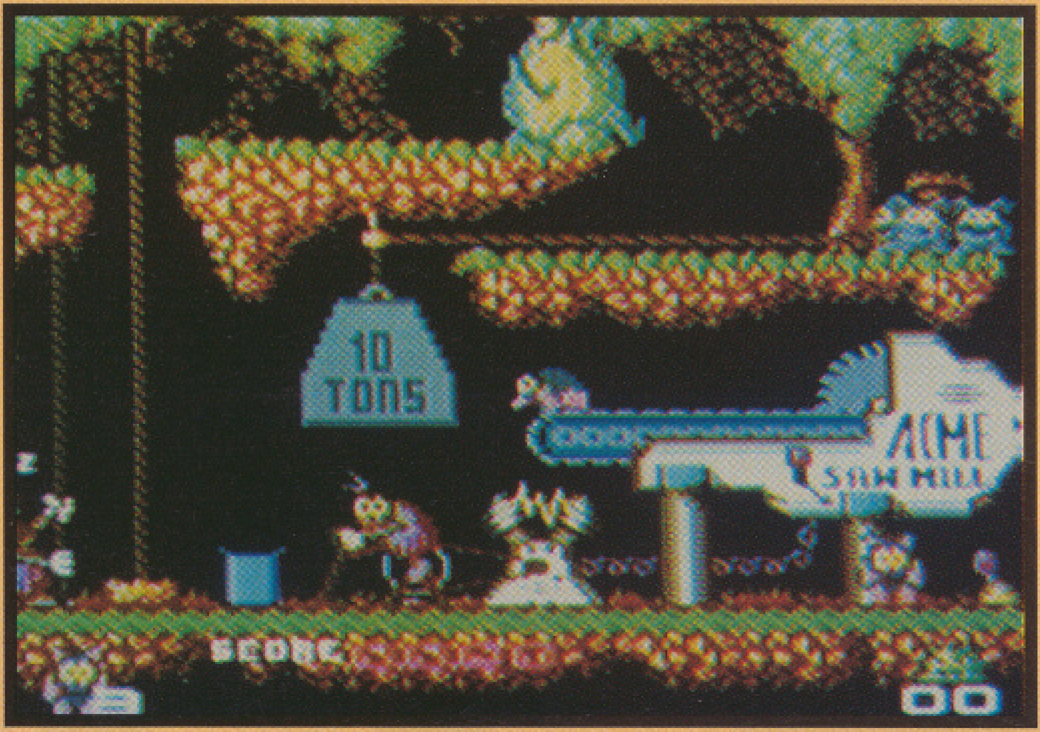
You are a born hero...after all, every other creature is happy eating the nourishing (yet rather boring) plant life that grows near to the village. After years of dull weeds for tea (Rik knows about that...), you decided to go adventuring to find a yummy basketful of tuck.However, on your return with the berries that Mother Nature was so kind to supply you with, you find to your horror that the village is deserted! What's more, there are huge footprints leading (gasp!) into the scary side of your (supposedly deserted) island!

Pausing only to swill down the tasty berries to get your energy up, you grasp the challenge firmly by the horns. Taking the advantage of its eyes watering somewhat you follow the footprints...

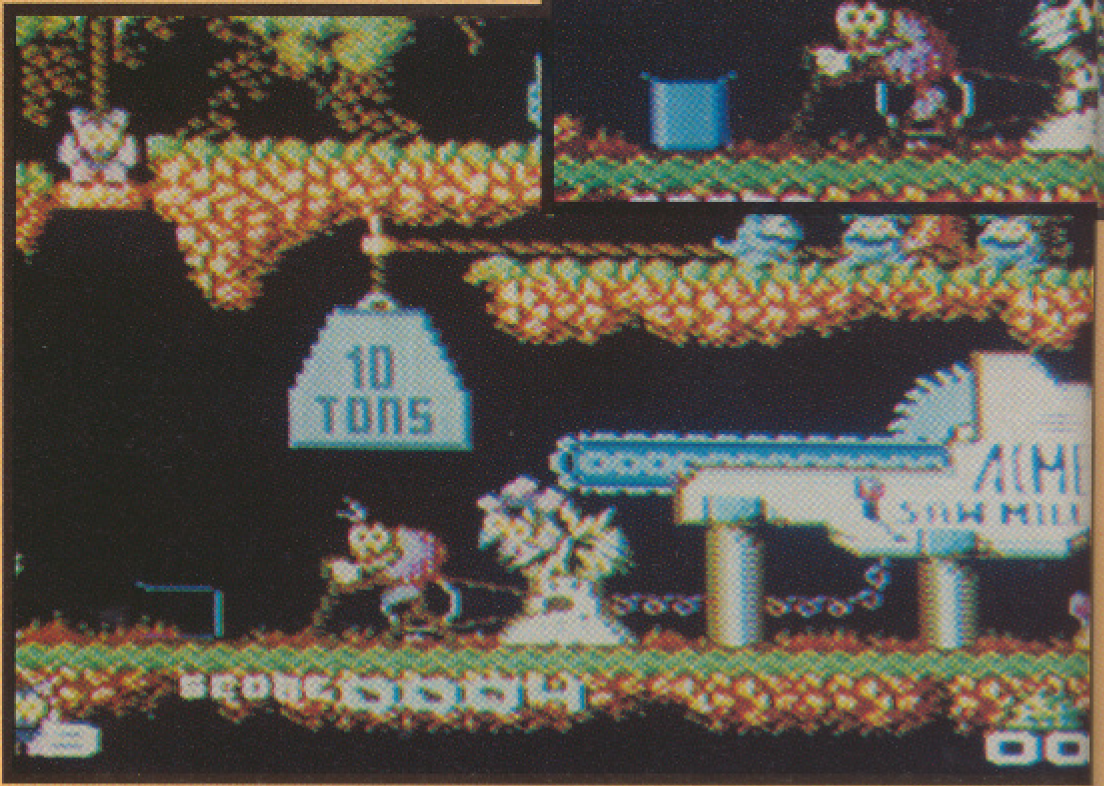
Anyone who has ever played a platform game (and that's about 999 in 1000 of you) will take to Creatures immediately. It's almost sickeningly cute, incredibly colourful and frantic, with loads of great sprites, dinky tunes and parallax scrolling. Despite your cutesy appearance you can pack a punch - or rather a laser beam - and your supply of magic can be upgraded as you progress in the game.

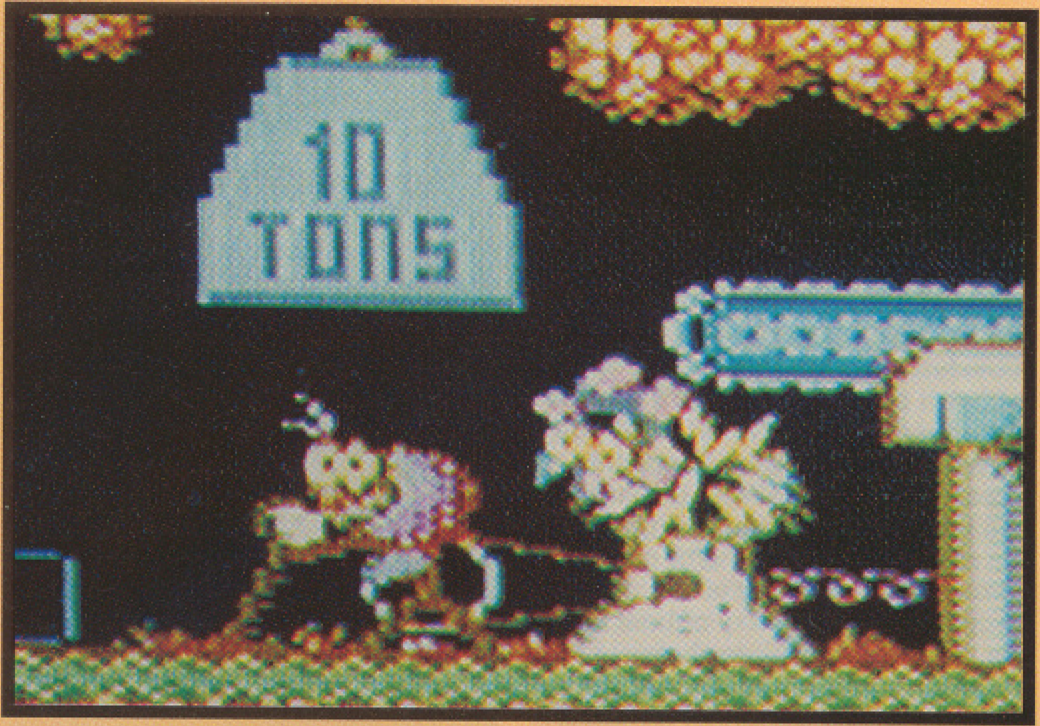
Throughout the game are various little buddies of yours that the Demons who have kidnapped the villagers left behind. Collect enough ofthese fuzzy suckers and you can spend them at the witch's shop for extra weapons. Unlike your own weedy magic these new spells can be used to create curving weapons, rapid firing or long range ones. If in a tight corner you can use one of your limited flamethrowers to great effect!

Your energy is depleted on contact with one of the nasty









Fax

Furry Funny

Creatures can be found at almost every large social gathering... from Wimbledon to the CES show, loads of little bugs with those annoying furry feet and rolling eyes will be given away. Don't buy them though as they are being tortured! The colourful strap that advertises the product is in fact stapled to their head and causes severe brain damage!!

TURES



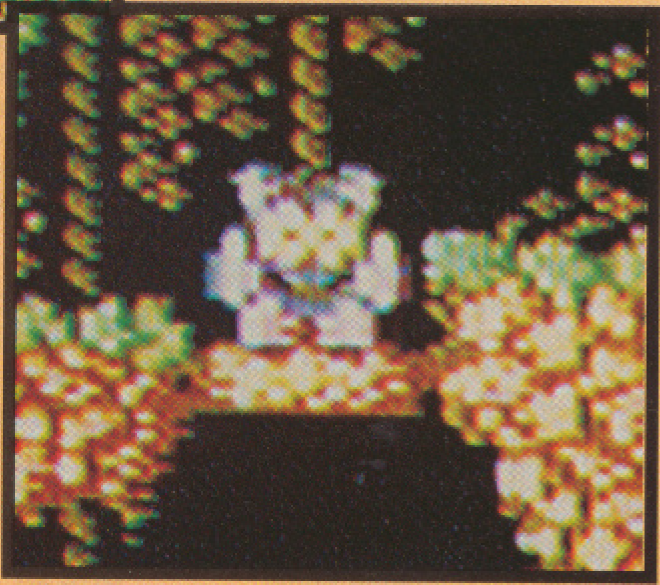
creatures that inhabit the horrible side of the island. They come in all shapes and forms and although they are the enemy the Demon's servants really are cute to look at. They are just as colourful and wriggly as you are and it is a shame to despatch them.

However, fail to do this and you could end up with a sore tummy from lackof food - as they take no greater pleasure than sapping the very strength from your bones. Contact with them is almost always fatal so avoid them if at all possible. If it isn't possible to avoid them then blast them into little bits with your magic weapon!!

Win through enough of the level and you can meet the nasty little Demon at the end. They are always nasty but this one is nastier than most. He has set up a torture for one of your furry chums! These tortures vary from level to level but the basic idea is to think your way to your pal's rescue and utilise the objects around you to free him.

Fail and painful death for the poor mite is always the result! However, success is rewarded with the creature's escape and the vanquish of yet another Demon. Can you win through all five levels and destroy the REALLY nasty guy at the end of the game?

Question is, will you really want to? Happily the answer is yes. Creatures really is cute and the gameplay lives up to the great graphics, with a maddeningly addictive element that'll have you coming back to the keyboard time and time again. One to look out for, but don't look under the bed after you switch off the computer...



YC FUN ONE

skorebox

9	7
8	8

overall 91



FISTS OUT

Beat-em-ups come and Beat-em-up go, and some give you a good hard kick in the goolies. Sean Kelly finds out which ones do what......

It's a bit unsocial if you think about it, but since just about the beginning of time, man has used fisticuffs to sort out any dispute or argument that he might be involved in. It's not suprising really. It's faster and more conclusive than suing someone, and it gets rid of all that pent up frustration. After all, straight after someone has just put you down in front of your mates there's nothing worse than being stuck for suitable reply, and more often than not a quick boot in the gonads serves just as admirably as a witty retort worthy of Oscar Wilde.

Of course, the human obsession with 'lamping' anyone and everyone who gets in someones way for fun and sport hasn't been lost on the People Who Make Computer Games. So much so, in fact, that today you can't so much as announce a new computer or console without learning that System 3 are doing a version of 'The Last Ninja' for it. But more on that later. For the kick off (kick off-geddit? Please yourself missus), let's go back through the mists of time, to where it all began...

The first major beat 'em up, of course, was 'The Way of the Exploding Fist', released by Melbourne House when they weren't one of Virgin Mastertronics subsidiary labels. This caused what is known as 'a bit of a storm' when it first appeared. It spawned hundreds of imitators, some good, some bad, and most appalling. What it also did was provide computer gaming with one of the most enduring of genres. Here we present some of the landmarks in the history of beat 'em ups. Some are absolute show stoppers, some will keep you araldited to your computer for ages, and none of them are crap.

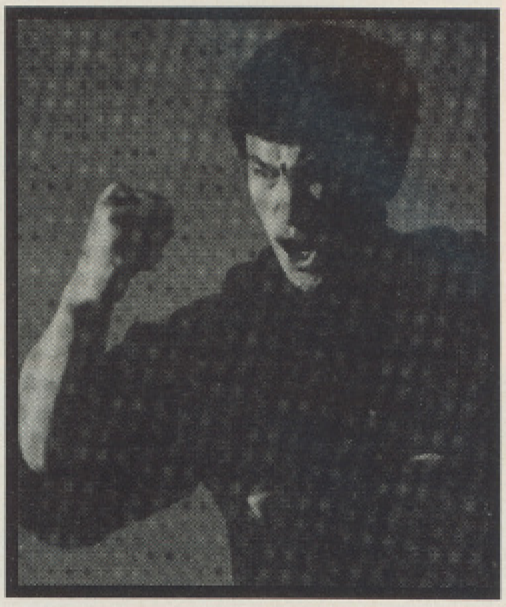
As with the shoot 'em up feature in the last ish, we've judged the beaties with a special set of markers. The first is graphics, which is fairly obvious. If it looks totally funky and colourful, it hits the high marks. If it looks like a Stone Roses single cover, it's pushing the lower limits. The second category is sonics, which encompasses both tunes and noises. If it sounds atmospheric, and a well landed punch sounds like something out of Miami Vice, it's a biggie. If it sounds like a Sonya and Big Fun record, forget it. The third marking category is 'brains'. Let me explain the last one.

On some beat 'em ups, you have to draw on massive brain reserves to remember all thirty seven thousand moves and the sequence of eighteen joystick manoevres to carry out just one, whilst in others the most taxing decision you have to make is wether to kick your opponent in the nuts or punch him in the face. Either type of game can be rewarding in their own way, so the brain factor isn't an indication of the games quality, but should give you some indication of whether you should bring your brain along, or wether you should leave it under the bed. The last of the four marks is the overall marks, which will tell you just how good this particular ninjing wonder found the game.

All clear? Good. Fists at the ready, let the punching begin.

The Way of the Exploding Fist.

The granddaddy of them all. First released in 1805 or thereabouts, it's an absolute classic. The idea of the game is simply to kick the living daylights out of your opponent as fast as possible. A number of moves are available, and there's nothing more satisfying than doing a quick spin before landing your opponent one on the side of his head and watching him go crashing to the floor. Way of the Exploding Fist also gets a special mention for the fact that singular sadists can set the game on two player mode, and kick the literally stationary opponent to oblivion. Yuk Yuk!



This one's still got something special after all those years, and is still a playable little epic by anyone's standards. There's quite a few joystick manouvres to get to grips with, but once you have them sussed, Fist becomes an eminently playable and addictive game. Graphics are a tad ropey by todays standards, but don't let that put you off. It's a classic, and deservedly so.

Graphics 78
Sonics 82
Brains 80
Overall 82

Punch Line: The first real beat 'em up, and still one of the best.

Punch Line: A tad dissapointing after its predecessor, but still more than playable.



FOR THE LADS

Fist II

Not suprisingly, this one is the sequel to TWOTEF I, and came out quite a few years later. This one takes the basic premise of the first game, but throws in a massive arcade adventure as well. You are descended from a grand master, and have been entrusted with defeating the evil warlord by travelling all over the shop, finding magical scrolls and



temple because... erm... well, because.

This one isn't as good as it's predecessor, but then there's very few games that are. It's playable, that's for sure, and the music lends atmosphere to the game. But, perhaps because the playing area is so enormous, the graphics are, apart from the main sprites, pretty bland throughout. The arcade adventure element does enhance the game though, and mapping freaks could be playing this game for eons.

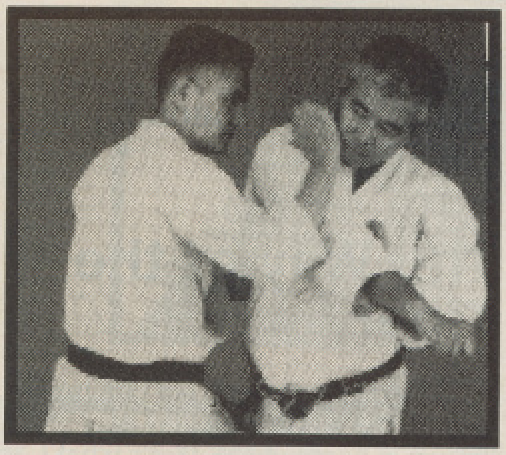
Graphics 70
Sonics 83
Brains 84
Overall 76

Bushido:The Way of the Warrior

This one is a Microprose game programmed at Graftgold by a team including Steve Turner, in which the main aim is to infiltrate a castle in which the enemy of the leader of your clan has entrenched himself, and regain control. Dead easy or what? The player can chose who he sends into the castle to carry out his aims, from the megastealthy Ninja to Monks and Yambushis, or Mountain Warriors, the

type of bloke who wrestles Tigers and farts in bears faces for a laugh. In addition to the ninjing and fighting, there's tons of stuff to collect and use, and it all goes to make this one massively huge and sophisticated game.

The game is played in a self mapping isometric castle of sorts, and although the actual beat 'em up element isn't exactly the most



sophisticated, the gameplay is exciting and good fun. The graphics are good, and it's obvious that a lot of effort and thought have gone into making sure it looks and 'feels' good. As a consequence it has the look of one of those pet projects that someone develops themselves and then places with a software house once it's just about finished.

Unusual, but a game that you will keep on going back to to check out what's round the next corner.



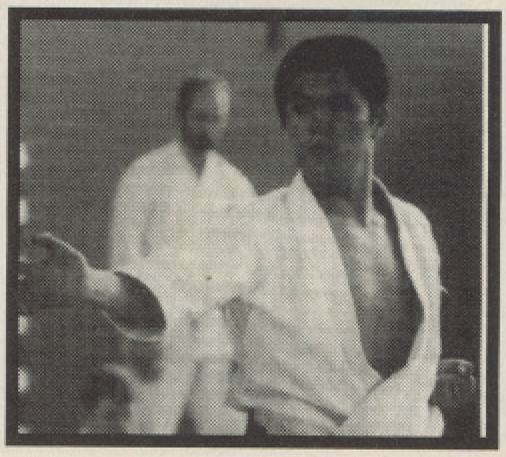
Graphics 86
Sonics 80
Brains 86
Overall 87

Punch Line: An unusual but addictive variant that'll keep you coming back for ages.

IK+

International Karate with a '+' sign, along with some pretty good improvements. I must admit that this game from Sytem 3 is probably my favourite beat 'em up of all time on the Commodore 64. On it's basic level it's quite simply a Fist variant with various international backdrops. Beyond that, though, it's quite simply a highly polished and addictive game.

The joystick commands are straightforward and fairly easy to learn, so you'll soon be bashing away with style and finesse. Unlike some beat 'em ups, there is also the challenge of opponents who get progressively more difficult to beat, and some thought has to go into



FEATURE

using the right manoevres against some of the tougher opponents. The music, sound effects and graphics are all excellent, and if you only get one beat 'em up ever, make sure that this is the one.

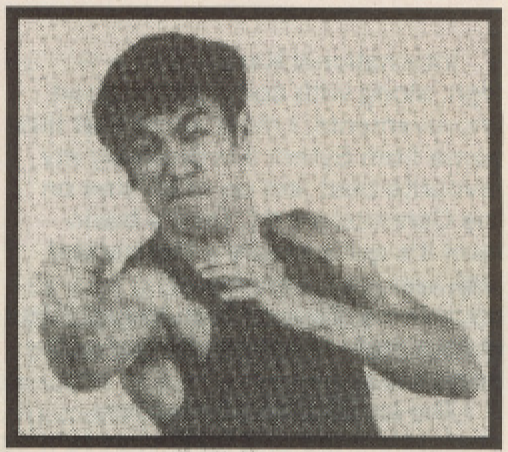
Graphics 90
Sonics 85
Brains 80
overall 90

Punch Line: The best. So colourful, so tuneful, so playable, so buy it.

Bruce Lee

Based on the original and best of the cinemas Kung Fu crowd, this early C64 game featured a tiny sprite that you are meant to think looks like our hero. It doesn't, but that doesn't stop this game from being a bit of a corker. The aim of the game is to collect all the lanterns in a room before you will be allowed to progress to the next room. You will be attacked by Ninjas and even nastier Green Yamo as you attempt to do this, but are able to leap around from ledge to ledge and climb vines and ladders in order to acheive your aims.

This game we first released in 1984, and boy does it look it's age. It even loads up with the American



National Anthem playing. Ptui. Although the game looks horrible, the sound isn't too bad, and it still plays pretty well considering it's age. As, far as I'm aware, it's only available on a fab compilation called 'Karate Ace', but it's still worth hunting out if you can find a copy. Dead old, but dead playable and dead addictive.

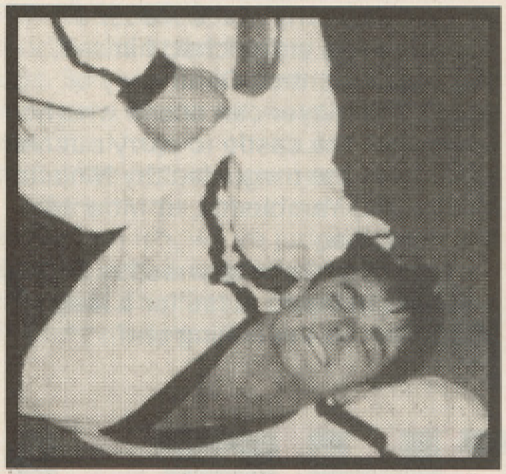
Graphics 40
Sound 60
Brains 60
Overall 75

Punch Line: It looks horrible, don't sound much better, but people could still learn a thing or two from the playability.

Kung Fu Master

A basic scrolling beat 'em up, in which the aim is to use your ninjing skills to work your way to the fifth floor of the temple of the Wizard, in order to rescue the beautiful maiden he's holding captive. That's about it as far as scenario goes for this one.

I might be wrong, and flog me with a wet codpiece dipped in custard if I am, but I think this one



was based on an arcade game. One thing's for certain, it plays like one. The player has to work his way along through each floor of the temple, and on each he's assaulted by various beasties and enemies. The moves aren't sophisticated by any stretch, but it's good fun, and has tons and tons of 'just one more go'-ness about it. Fab gear, and no messing.

Graphics 78
Sonics 75
Brains 70
Overall 82

Punch Line: A non brain taxing way of spending an afternoon.

The Way of the Tiger

Why do most beat 'em ups have to have the words 'the way of...' thrown in somewhere, that's what I want to know. This Gremlin epic sold by the proverbial pigload when it first appeared. The scenario is the usual stuff about defeating the bad guy who's done your grand master wrong and so on. What's different is that Tiger involves three different disciplines, namely Unarmed combat, Pole fighting and Samurai Sword Fighting.

This is like a three game compilation in itself really, as each discipline has it's own individual and



distinct graphic and sonic style. The pole fighting is my particular favourite, although each is more than good enough. The programming is very polished, and the tunes are fab. It's out on the Kixx label for three quid, and a bit of billy bargain it is too.

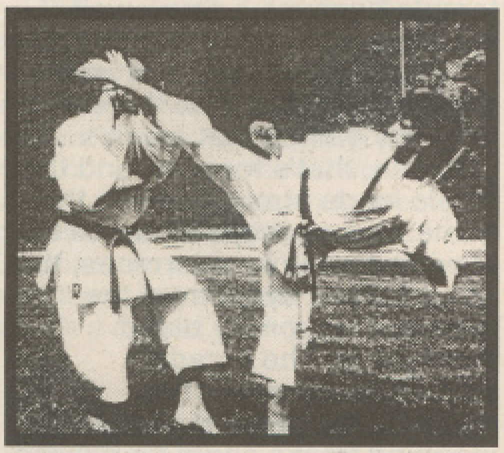
Graphics 80
Sonics 83
Brains 83
overall 82

Punch Line: A trio of different but fun games that still look and sound a bit good.

Ninja Remix

When System 3's 'The Last Ninja' first appeared on the C64, it was astounding. It was like the beat 'em ups of old, but done in full colour isometric projection 3D. The aim was to ninj your way around huge playing areas for some reason that excapes me at the moment, but that was hardly the most important point anyhow. Both games had massive playing areas, brilliantly drawn and animated sprites and backdrops, and some of the best music you'll ever hear on a C64.

The Ninja Remix features chunks of both games, polished up and bunged together for todays



audience. But, it's not released yet. So, let's phone those nice people at System 3 and find out all about it. Dial, dial...ring ring.... 'Hello. System 3 aren't at home at the moment, but if you'd like to leave a message after the tone....Oh, and by the way, Ninja Remix is going to be totally fab and

sponditious, combining all the best bits of the first two games into truly funky gaming experience, well worth the spondoolies any time.' Oh. That's alright then.

Punch Line: If it's as good as it's two predecessors, it'll be a bit of a classic.

Five People who would probably enjoy a good beat em up.

1. Bruce Lee

A bit of a lad, ol' Bruce, and given to curling his instep round a bad guys cranium without so much as a by your leave whenever the mood took him. It's also rumoured that Bruce used to hang around Scunthorpe Pier during the summer season threatening to 'give a good tonking' to anyone who even glanced in his direction. This rumour is not true.

2. James Bond

Famous spy and secret agent, who probably knows seventeen thousand ways to kill a man with his toenail clippings. (His own, that is, not the person he was killing. I mean, can you imagine: 'I'm going to kill you now Mr. Jaws, but before I do, would you mind clipping your toenails...)

3. Frank Bruno

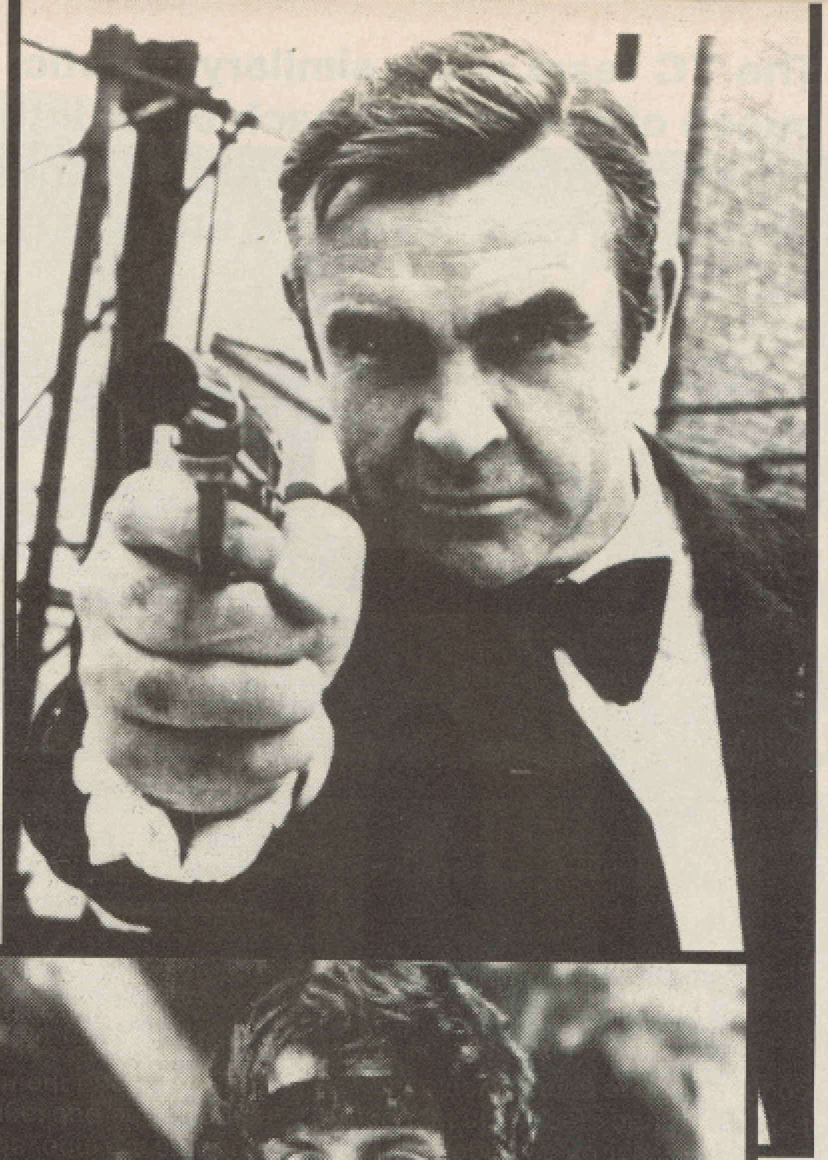
Well known English pugilist, famous for his catch phrase 'Pass the sauce, Harry.'

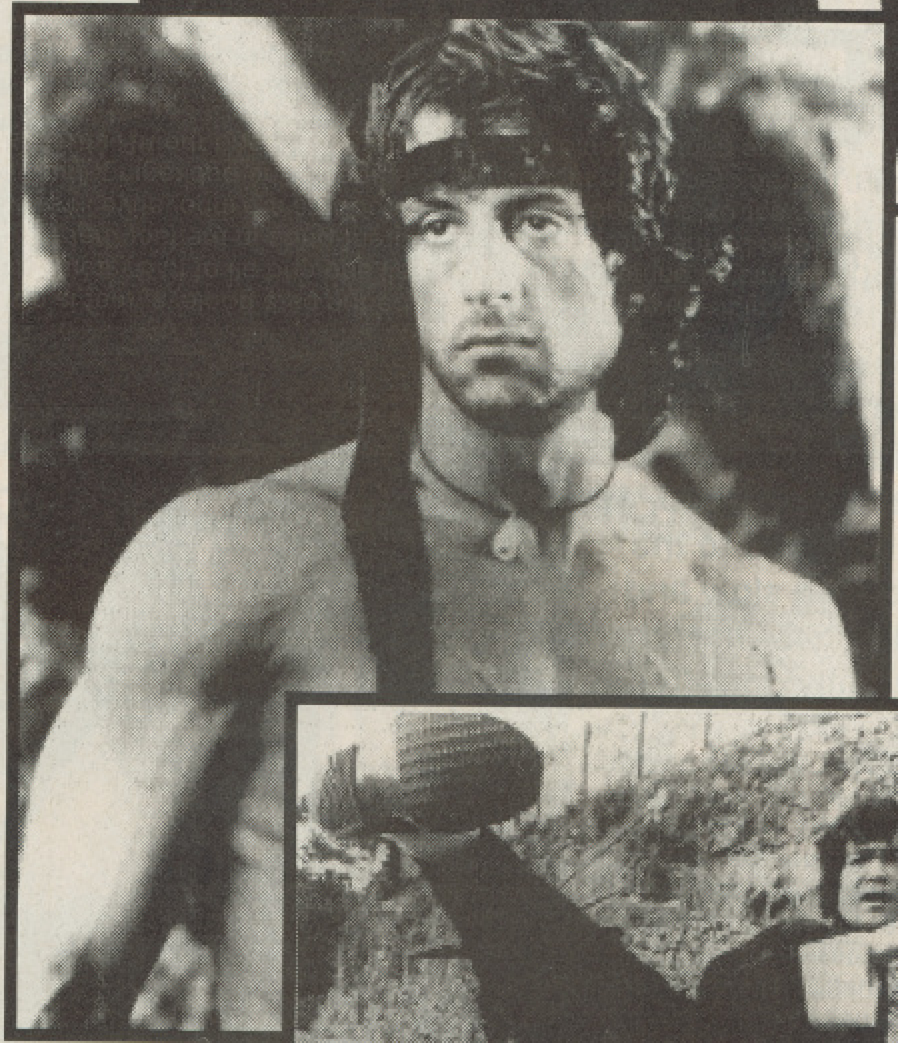
4. Albert Einstein

Respected scientist and physicist. What is not generally known is that he got his theory of relativity accepted by the scientific community by threatening to 'come round with the lads and give a seeing to' to any member of the scientific community questioning his assertions.

5. Sylvester Stallone

Highly regarded art expert and orator, well known for his sensitive portrayals of shrinking violets such as Rocky, Rambo and.... oh. That's it. Just them two.









The YC team,and a similary chaotic bunch of hacks blast each other inthe chests with remote controls. Jeffrey Davy reports on the event known only as.....

QUASAR

LASER-LIGHT FANTASTIC

"Eat laser death, Editor scum" cried the young freelancer, leaping from behind a wooden partition, pumping red-light death from the nozzle of his 'Phasar' weapon. The Editor gasped - "what treachery is this" he groaned, as he slumped to the floor, too slow and old to beat the lithe, sprightly contributor ...

...Well, you can always dream, eh readers? (Only joking, Rik!) The closest to that I've ever got was at the headquarters of one of North London's newest (and possibly most militaristic and gratuitous) pastimes - "Quasar - the live action space game".

Foolishly, and many moons ago, a team of four (now mostly ex-) YC staff - Rik Henderson (the Big Ed), Mark Newton (designer), Ashley Cotter-Cairns (contributor) and Manni Cesai (ex-photographer) - had challenged the "Rest of the World" - myself, so-called 'contributor', Duncan Evans, Hew Pryce, Marcus Bamford, and a Girlie called Michelle. They paid for their arrogance!

Quasar originated in Australia and New Zealand. It expanded half way around the world to Turnpike Lane, North London, where it opened in June last year. Since then it has gained 11,000 members with loads of potential space-warriors flocking to its converted cinema premises every day.

A new "franchise" (like a branch) has recently opened in Dublin with a wide futuristic plaza layout and improved (more accurate) weapons and weapon packs (they talk and give a kick when you get hit).





There are currently plans to open two more Quasar Centres, in Romford and Manchester.

Games last thirty minutes and up to twenty people (on two - Red and Green - teams of ten) can scamper around the split-level arena. Each player has three "lives", displayed as red lights on their front-mounted pack.

If they're shot, the lights flash and one goes out. Lose all three and they're DEAD. Well, alright then, more sort-of suspended animation a small rejuvenating booth has to be visited to restore the life-lights before going back to the game.

The guns themselves come in two different varieties. There is the standard type which glows red at the

end (which makes it a target - people can shoot that, causing the fun's owner to lose a life) and has a (ever-so-slightly inaccurate) range of 30 feet and the new "boomer" requires more accuracy but doesn't glow - this can be quite advantageous.

Players don't just 'waste' people, there's a system of (personal) scoring - 100 per hit on an opponent, 500 on the enemy team's HQ (which lets out a siren sound when being shot), minus 30 if they're shot and minus 30 if they shoot a member of their own team. Up at the end of the hall is a large scoreboard which keeps track of team scores - this is the telling point at the end of the game, as the YC lot found to their cost!

...The game began and the two teams slid silently into the dark, smoke-filled arena -Rushing to find vantage points from which to snipe at the opposition. Swirling lights pick out scampering figures, the flow of life-lights red against the near-impenetrable black, misty atmosphere.

Soon the sound of loosed laser-light wafted across the battleground, mixed with the thudding of feet, the wailing of the threatened HQs and the abusive shouting as someone was caught and 'taken out' by a swift-moving foot soldier.

Many people were caught in impossible impasse situations. Rik Henderson, for instance, crouched behind a wooden wall, taking wild pot-shots at anything that moved, trapping people nearby. Alternatively, the problem of just knowing that somebody is at the top of a flight of







stairs waiting for an unwary player.

For thirty minutes, the two groups waged violent, competitive war on each other until ...

"I got completely smegged" remarked your editor and mine Rik Henderson, emerging from a crushing defeat. "We wuz robbed" cried the YC team. They wanted the opportunity to grab opponents and hold them down whilst shooting them, with the option to garotte the opposition with their gun's wires - you trust these people tho edit YC?

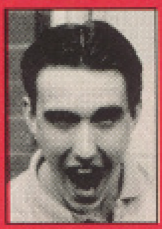
The result was a decisive 142 to 98 point victory for the "Rest of the World". Ha! Victory was ours!



Quasar (London) is at: "The Quasar Centre", Frobisher Road, LONDON, N8 0QX - 081-348 9798.

Prices: Membership (compulsory but lasts for a year once paid): £2. Games: Under 17 - £2, Over 17 - £4 (£3 before 6pm on weekdays).

WHEELS OF FIRE



DOMARK - £14.99 Tape, £24.99 Disk

Rik likes driving in his car, and it's crap!!! But what does he make of this compilation of driving based arcade conversions.

Hard Drivin' may never have been released on the commie 64 before, but it's certainly doing the rounds when it comes to compilations. This is a shame because the game, on the C64, is a pile of doggy poop and no mistake.

Rumour has it that the final product was ported straight across from the Speccy but I don't believe it for a moment. For a start the Speccy version was a darn sight better than this (in fact I would add that it was



the best version of all). The graphics are jerky (even more jerky than the nerd section in your school canteen), the sound is appalling (do dogs often wheeze like that?) and the gameplay is so mind numbingly crap that it would be very hard to liken this version to the arcade 'mother' is any respect whatsoever. Add to this the fact that the opposing cars seem to 'hone' in on you whilst your peacefully keeping to the correct side of the road and you have a game that will wend its way to the black bin liner in no time.

And Chase HQ is nigh on as naff. Again the commie 64 conversion was probably the worst version released of this classic coin-op. The idea is to



'chase' a crim in a car over hill and dale and finally, upon catching up with him/her, you must bash the smelly brown stuff out of their car in order to make them concede. Now, although your car has absolutely no damage done to it even though bits of opponent fly everywhere, this is quite fun in the arcade.

Unfortunately the lack of any apparent speed, blocky enemy cars, difficult controls, and not enough



variation in gameplay, makes this a driving game to avoid. There ARE some nice touches, like the sound and the presentation of the screen layout, but if it was sound you were after your money is better invested in the new Happy Mondays CD.

Power Drift makes a credible attempt to claw this compilation back into the realm of value. Hitting a YC Fun One in the very first issue of YC back in January, it's lost little of its appeal. Nowadays it may be considered a tad too easy, but the gameplay, graphics and sound are all still on a par with what is achieved today, and it is a considerably decent driving game that may just lack a little in variation of tracks, a good game none-the-less.

And Turbo Outrun is still the best arcade driving game available, and it still betters a lot of the Amiga games that are around. Programmed by the Probe team, it received a YC Fun One in the January issue also, and is still one of the games I like to get my teeth into when I've got a spare moment. The graphics are very nice indeed, and the scrolling and screen updating both give the best idea of speed that you're likely to see on our nations top selling home computer.

A compilation that you'd do best to avoid like anything if you've already got Power Drift or Turbo Outrun, otherwise you may want to invest your pennies, you may even



find something in Chase HQ or Hard Drivin' that myself (and the rest of the YC team) failed to latch onto.

Fax

Tyred Out

If you got a tyre pump and pumped a lot of air into your tyres, and kept on pumping, soon you'd hear a load bang, be thrown on your back, and your tyre would be miraculously replaced with lots of bits of rubber.

It is also advisable that you never go more than 100mph on a two-seater bicycle, your legs might fall off.

skorebox

	N/A		7
	N/A		6

overall 82

alphavite

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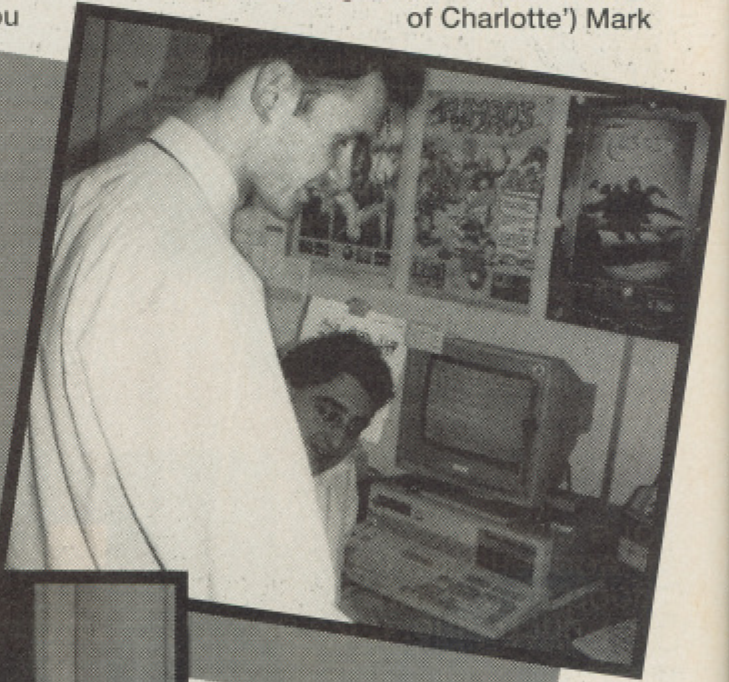
IT'S SYSTE

System 3, possibly the country's top C64 publishing house, lies in the heart of Pinner, hardly the cultural paradise of the world. Rik hikes his way to meet the team behind the best, and most well known, trilogy ever, the Last Ninja saga...

If you think about it, System 3 is not one of the most prolific companies in software releases, indeed, although the company has been in existence for nigh-on eight years, only 16 commie 64 games will have been released by the end of this year, a mere 2 a year on average. But you look at the track record, in fact only a couple of those games would fare badly in today's market.

This is mainly because the Cale brothers (Mark, co-founder of the company, and Adrian, now a director) have always had the policy of concentrating on product that would appear well ahead of it's technological time. And if you requested a look inside the System 3 big cabinet of trophies you'd be forgiven for thinking that you're inside Liverpool's show room instead. There is hardly a product in System 3's range that has gone without at least one gold plated accolade.

But even if the products take years in development it doesn't guarantee that they're going to be the cats gooleys, that is not the be all and end all of it. System 3 takes great pride in the fact that its products are innovative in every respect. The packaging, the marketing, and the PR stunts are all contributory to its games' success.





In fact it is this innovativeness that caused the lads to be expelled from the PC Show in a very famous incident. In order to promote the game 'Twister - Mother of Harlots' (later changed to 'Twister - Mother of Charlotte') Mark had hired a group of scantily clad females to dance in 'Pans People' style. Some of the show's bigwigs though took offence to the fact that the girls wore little more than strips of leather, and thus the stand was closed down and System 3 was expelled from the rest of the show.

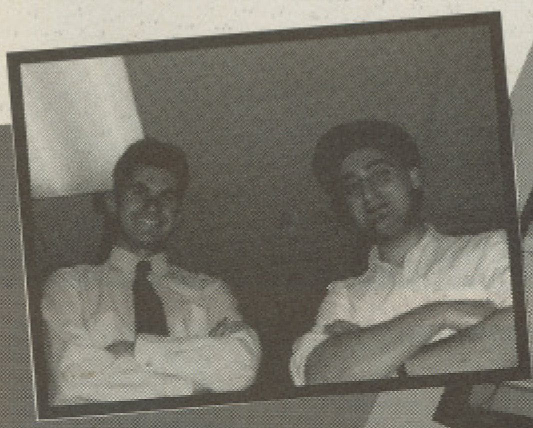
But the effect that this controversial event had on the industry was that every distributor and magazine were dying to get their grubby mitts on a copy of the game. And this only helped the name of the company grow, so that by the time of the next release everybody was waiting with more than eager anticipation.

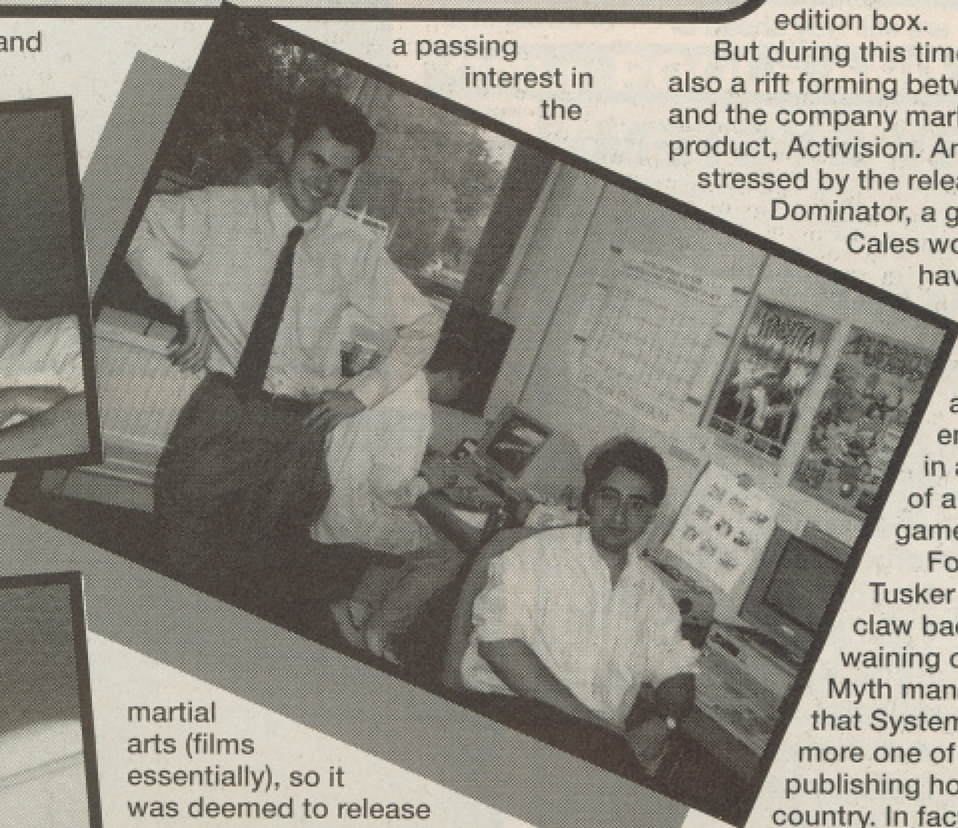
And this release was also to change not just the growing company in Pinner, but the entire industry, for this release was the first of possibly the most famous game series ever, The Last Ninja.

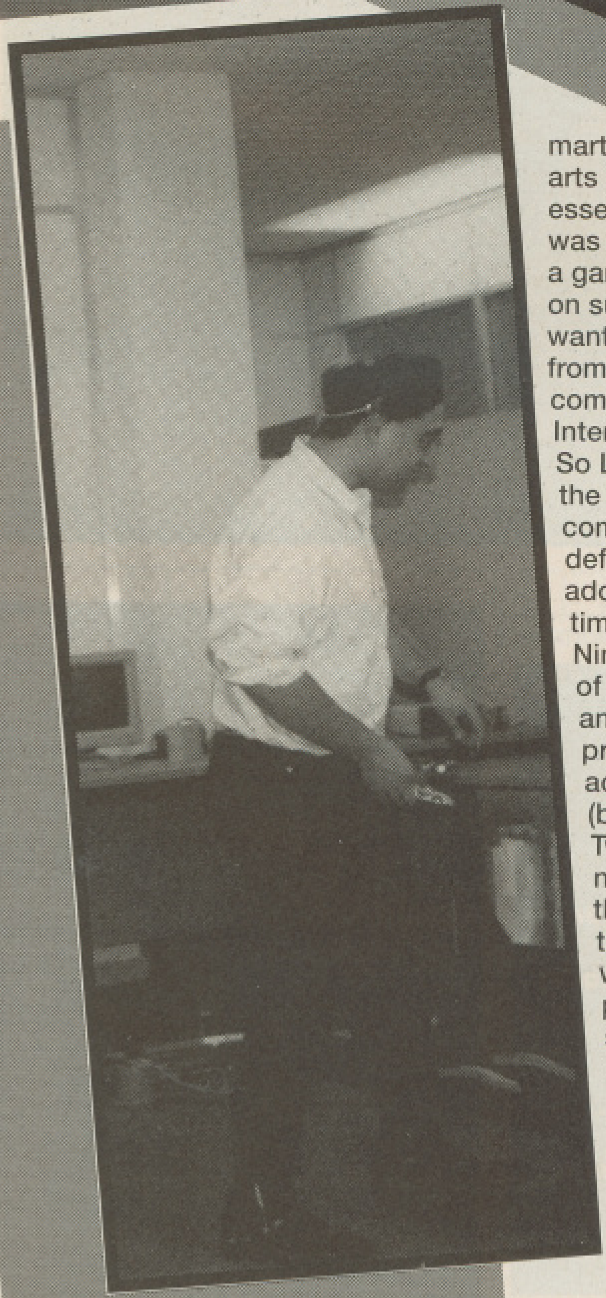
This was brought about mainly due to the fact that beat-em-ups

EMATIC

were very popular at the time, and Mark Cale had more than a passing interest in the martial arts (films essentially), so it was deemed to release a game that could capitalise on such a market. But System 3 wanted something a tad different from the norm, and besides the company had earlier released International Karate, a typical beatie. So Last Ninja was developed much the same as a film might be, with a complex plot, a storyboard and a definite plan of locations. And also adopting an idea popular of the time (the 3D view) The Last Ninja was nothing short of a masterpiece, and a programming achievement (by John Twiddy, a newcomer to the trade at that time) by which other pieces of software are still compared.







The game was such a success, and won so many awards, that System 3 was later (after the release of another milestone in its genre, International Karate +) to update the theme, and release the first ever sequel of an original game. And it even surpassed the original in the praise that was rained upon it. The Cales also exceeded themselves on the packaging front by repackaging it, in order to give the game a new lease of shelf life, with a map, a new booklet, a rubber shuriken and a ninja mask all included in the limited edition box.

But during this time there was also a rift forming between System 3 and the company marketing all of its product, Activision. And this was stressed by the release of Dominator, a game that the Cales would rather have just scrapped due to the fact that it was a stock shoot-em-up, and not in any way typical of a System 3 game.

Fortunately Tusker managed to claw back some waining credibility, and Myth managed to secure that System 3 was once more one of the top C64 publishing houses in this country. In fact Myth had such an in depth plot, a movie synopsis has been drawn up and is currently being touted around the movie moguls. And the Activision deal was to end with the release of Vendetta, which essentially reworked the Ninja formula, and added the extra element of a driving game.

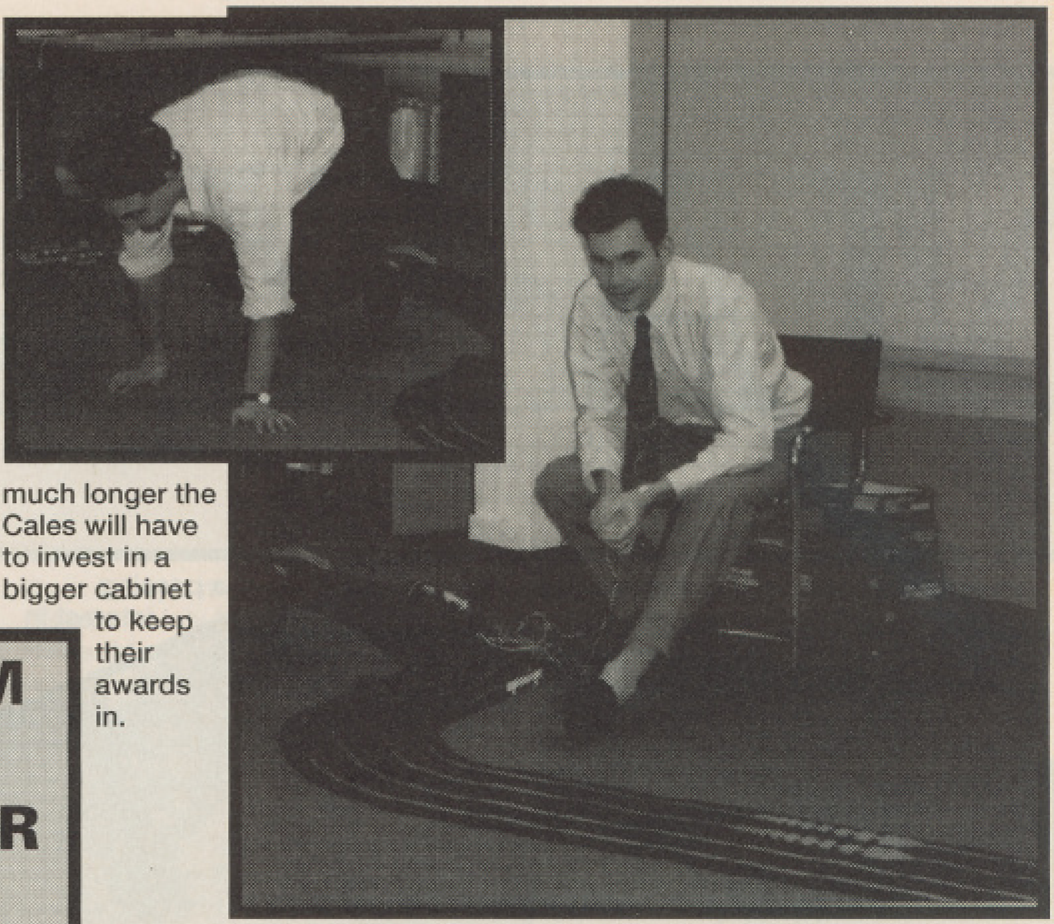
So the company finally went its own way and with the release of Flimbo's Quest (now in the C64GS package as one of the introductory games), it showed that business was as usual.



And as Adrian states, "System 3

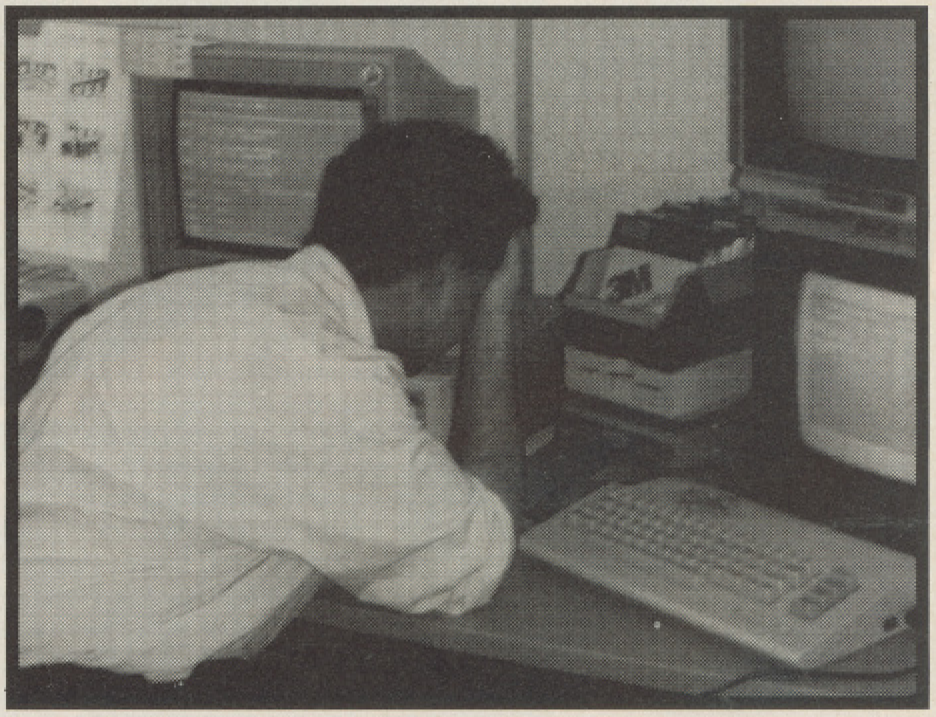
has a license in itself, in the form of the Ninja series", and we are once again to be treated to doses of the formula, although things have been much updated. The company even feels that its Last Ninja 2 is outdated, so much so that we now see the release of Ninja Remix, a reworked version of the previous game. This is essentially, though, a taster for Last Ninja 3, by far the most impressive of the trilogy, and a real contender (at this early stage) as the best commie 64 game EVER.

So System 3 still grows (especially with the announcement that it'll be supporting the C64GS), and the games are still way ahead of their time, and if this continues for much longer the Cales will have to invest in a bigger cabinet to keep their awards in.



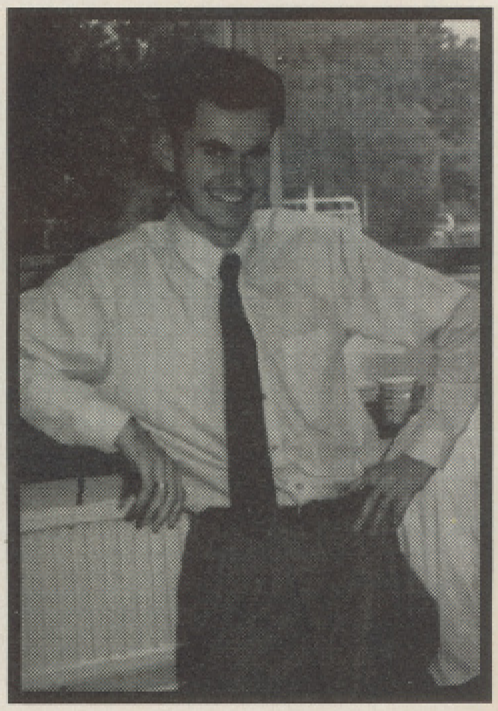
EVERY SYSTEM 3 C64 GAME EVER (PROBABLY)

Death Star Intercepter
Colony Seven
Laser Cycle
International Karate
Twister - Mother of Charlotte
Last Ninja
Bankok Knights
International Karate +
Last Ninja 2
Dominator
Tusker
Myth
Vendetta
Flimbo's Quest
Ninja Remix
Last Ninja 3



GAMES TO COME

Borderline - Formerly Turbo Charge, this is a driving game that promises to break new barriers in the genre. The programmers even use a gigantic Skalextric set for 'research'. Er... Yes!
International Karate Deluxe - The sequel to the sequel of International Karate, once again written by Archer McLean.
Dawn of Steel - This is Myth 2 and is gonna be well wicked (more awards on their way).
Deadlock - A shoot-em-up kind of arcade adventure kind of thang.
Haunted - Erm... Not much is known about this'un.
Flimbo's Quest 2 - Currently being coded, and obviously the sequel to Flimbo's Quest.



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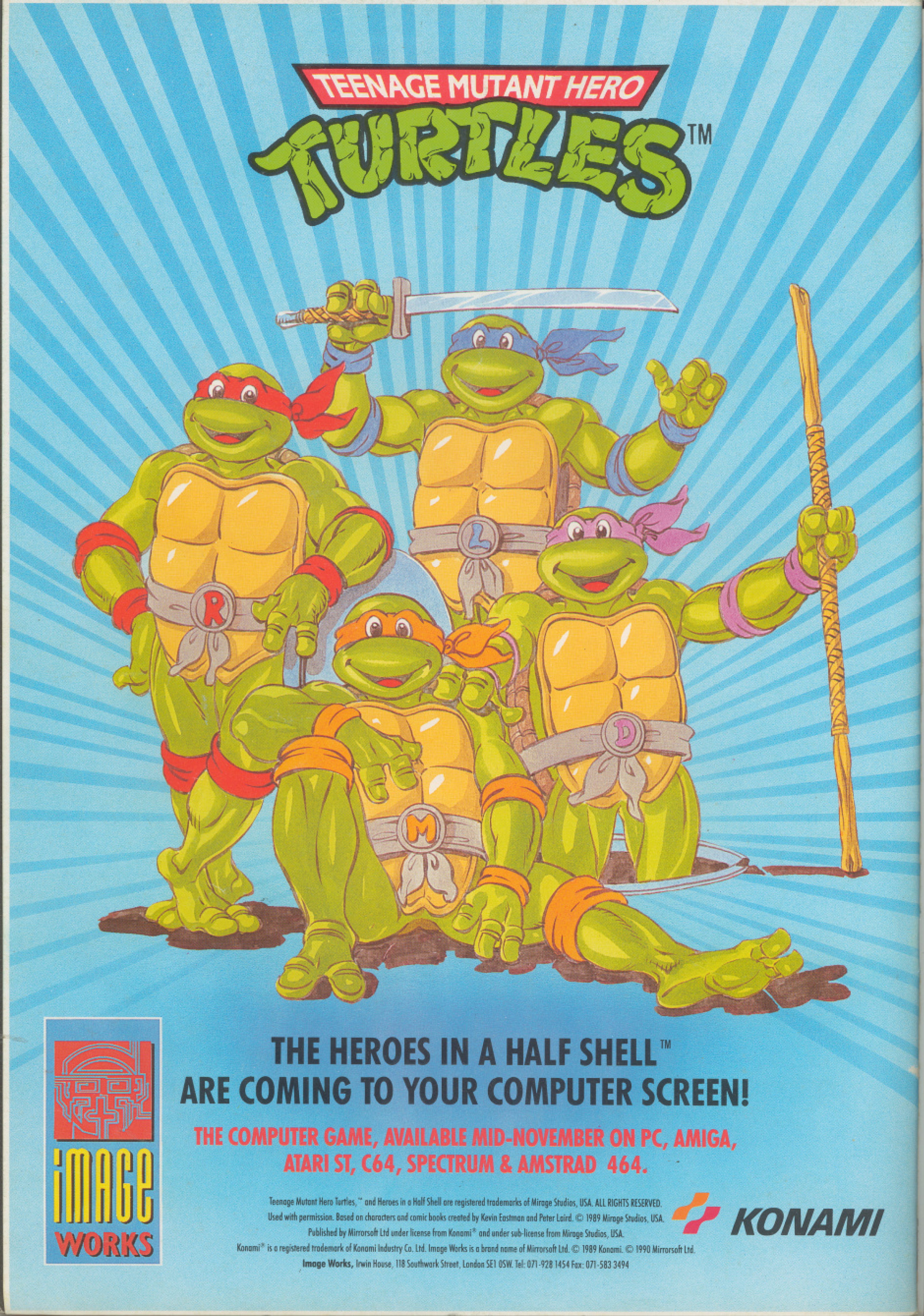
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